

CONTRA

**TEMPEST X** FINAL DOOM FORMULA 1

SATURN:

DARK SAVIOR **AMOK** POWERSLAVE SF ALPHA 2 FIGHTING VIPERS

NINTENDO 64: SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE **ULTRA RALLY** KI GOLD



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NINTENDO 64 SUPER CHEATS MASSIVE TIPS & TRICKS GE SPORTS GOES LONG ON 32-EIT FOOTBALL!!



The waiting is over. Nintendo 64® is finally here, on the shelf, waiting for you to snatch it up. But what's the big deal, you're probably asking yourself. It took long enough. Was the wait worth it? You bet, and here's why.

The Nintendo 64 controller is the most revolutionary video game interaction device ever. It all starts with the analog Control Stick. Unlike the traditional all-or-nothing digital Control Pad (it's got one of those too), the analog Control Stick is sensitive to even the slightest movement. Move it a little to make Mario tiptoe. Crank on it and watch him take off in a full-tilt sprint. Best of all, the Control Stick gives you 360 degrees of control. The three grips on the controller let you hold the controller three different ways, depending on what works best for the game you are playing. For saving your records and high scores, the controller has a handy slot for your personal Memory Pak. Now when you go to your friend's house for some multi-player action, you can bring all your

personal data with you, snug inside your favorite color controller (it comes in six stylin' colors).

what's up our sleeve.

It gets better. Most new gaming technology looks cool when it first comes out, but by the time you get it home, something bigger and badder is on the way. Fortunately, the Nintendo 64 was designed with maximum capability for future upgrades in mind. Four controller ports mean four-player gaming from the get-go. Expansion ports allow for more system RAM and new peripherals (can you

say readable-writable storage media?). The bottom line: The Nintendo 64 is currently the most advanced video game system ever, and it is the only system that is designed to change with technology.



SO MANY

lf you're going to invest your

hard-earned (or mooched) cash in a video game system, you want to be sure you can play plenty of great games on it. Not an issue. There are over 50 titles in development for N64 covering all gaming categories, from action to role-playing, sports, fighting, simulation, puzzles, you name it. Furthermore, these are not titles that will wind up in the bargain

bin after a month, because
Nintendo and the exclusive
N64 Dream Team developers
are dedicated to producing
Cutting-edge software that
takes full advantage of the
Nintendo 64's incredible
technology. A few of the
first wave of titles include

Super Mario 64<sup>11</sup>, PilotWings 64<sup>11</sup>, Wave Race 64<sup>11</sup>, Killer Instinct®Gold,

# GAMES ... SO FEW THUMBS.









Super Mario Kart R<sup>11</sup>, Wayne Gretzky's 3-D Hockey<sup>11</sup>, and *Star Wars: Shadows of* the Empire<sup>11</sup>! Most importantly, these and the many other titles on the way all must mee<u>t</u> Nintendo's high standards of fun and quality before they hit the shelf. What more do you need to know about the Nintendo 64 software library beyond that?

NINTENDO

# Anti-aliasing Makes

great transparency effects.
For example, objects seen
through water look different
than objects seen through air.

and powerful. Reality Co-processor The heart
and soul of the N64. A 64-bit custom chip from Silicon
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Trilinear MIP-map interpolation Subtly blends colors
and patterns of texture maps to make objects more realistic even
as they move closer to you. Microcode Custom CPU control
instructions optimized for audio, lighting, graphic details
and other ultrarealistic effects. Texture mapping Puts
a bitmapped picture or texture onto a surface. In other words,

a brick wall looks like a brick wall, not like a blank one. Wavetable synthesis Dynamic high-fidelity sounds. Found in pricey multimedia PCs. Z-Buffer Keeps stuff in the right place even if you're moving quickly. Objects maintain their true spatial relationships.

N64
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CHANGE THE SYSTEM

# SINIENTS



IMMERSE YOURSELF IN THE SPLENDOR OF WIPEOUT XL. PSYGNOSIS' SEQUEL TO THE GAME THAT PUT MILLIONS IN A TRANCE PAGE 44





**CONTRA LEGACY OF WAR** PAGE 41







STAR GLADIATOR PAGE 54

SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE **PAGE 101** 





KI GOLD **PAGE 106** 

**DARK SAVIOR 64 PAGE 113** 





AMOK **PAGE 114** 



**SONIC BLAST PAGE 130** 



# WALK ON WATER...

IS IT A GAME, OR DID SOMEONE SNEAK INTO YOUR HOUSE AND FILL YOUR TV WITH WATER AND LITTLE **JET-SKIERS?** 

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COVER

STORY

TAKE TO

THE OPEN

OCEAN AND

FEEL THE

WAVES

**TERRY WOLFINGER** Nice to have you back doin the cover "T"

# TEX THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN YOU'RE GOING TO PLAY IN THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE.

- 1. If you dislocate something, put it back.
- 2. Kickers aren't football players. They're kickers.
- 3. If referees could see everything, instant replay wouldn't be an issue.

- Don't let your center eat chili at pre-game meals.
- 5. If you get injured for a game, dress posh for the sidelines.
- 6. The only thing that can move an offensive linesman is a defensive linesman.
- 7. Ahead by one, go for two. Ahead by two, go for one.
- 8. End zone break-dance moves always make the highlights.
- Astroturf is excellent for miniature golf courses.
- 10. Ronnie Lott retired.

Incredibly authentic. Sega Sports NFL '97."



Coming this season. Only on Sega Saturn."























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ABC AUDIT & MEMBERSHIP APPLIED FOR: November, 1994

BPA AUDIT & MEMBERSHIP APPLIED FOR: February, 1996

ISSN# 1070-3020

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GameFan Volume 4 Issus 11 November 1996. Published modify by Mercogal Publisators, Inc. 5970 Weiner Busievan Suler 1240, Los Angeles California 90905. One Ferra subscoption (12 Issuss) is 50.49 Foreign and Careste and 51 per year. Please rend in U.S. bruds only. Resee allow 60 days for your first asse. Application to mil at Pacolical Postage Reas is Pending at Los Angeles. Ch and at additional malking offices. FOSTMASTER. Send change of address tomation.

A METROPOLIS PUBLICATION



For once all is quite. There are no wars to fight, no mysterious hardware lurking in the shadows, and no major industry shake-ups to speak of. Of course, this will likely change by the time you read this, but I'll enjoy it anyway, while it lasts. By the time you read this, the Nintendo 64 will have launched so you could probably care less anyway. Mario beckons... While we're on the subject, wait 'til you get a load of this month's cover story, WaveRace. This gem redefines home racing games as we know them with the most realistic physics ever displayed in a video game. The Nintendo 64 will no doubt come out of the gate smokin'. I hope the software flows fast enough to meet the demand. You'll also find two more revolutionary racers in this month's issue, Wipeout XL, and Formula 1. Though on opposite sides of the spectrum both provide the player an out-of-body experience. This month's Star Wars Shadows of the Empire coverage features a behind-the-scenes interview at LucasArts and a journey to the Saturn Sector will reveal the re-emergence of Scavenger. There's even some hot 16-bit stuff in here. It's a packed issue. I'll go away now.





SLICING THROUGH THE THIRD DIMENSION...









# *Readers'* top ten

- 1. Resident Evil PS
- 2. Super Mario RPG SNES
- 3. Street Fighter Alpha PS
- 4. Virtua Fighter 2 Saturn
- 5. Tekken 2 Arcade
- 6. Killer Instinct 2 Arcade
- 7. Panzer Zwei Saturn
- 8. Chrono Trigger SNES
- 9. Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3 PS
- 10. DK Country 2 SNES



# **READERS' MOST WANTED**

- 1. Super Mario<sup>64</sup> Nintendo<sup>64</sup>
- 2. Final Fantasy VII PS
- 3. NiGHTS Saturn
- 4. Virtua Fighter 3 Arcade
- 5. Crash Bandicoot PS
- 6. SF Alpha 2 PS/Saturn
- 7. Zelda<sup>64</sup> Nintendo<sup>64</sup>
- 8. Pilot Wings 64 Nintendo<sup>64</sup>
- 9. KI Gold Nintendo<sup>64</sup>
- 10. MK Trilogy Nintendo<sup>64</sup>



# *DEVELOPER'S*

This Month's Guests:

Mike Dietz & Doug TenNapel The Neverhood

- 1. Mean Bean Machine Genesis
- 2. Tekken 2 PS
- 3. Virtua Fighter Saturn
- 4. Crash Bandicoot PS
- 5. Vectorman Genesis

- 6. Gunstar Heroes Genesis
- 7. Toe Jam & Earl 2 Genesis
- 8. Super Mario<sup>64</sup> Nintendo<sup>64</sup>
- 9. Namco Museum PS
- 10. Wipeout PS

- 1. Crash Bandicoot PS
- 2. Waverace<sup>54</sup> Nintendo<sup>54</sup>
- 3. Amok Saturn
- 4. Wipeout XL PS
- 5. F1 PS
- 1. Final Fantasy VII PS
- 2. Policenauts PS
- 3. Wave Race64 Nintendo64
- 4. Fighting Vipers Saturn
- 5. Tobal No. 1 PS
- 1. Final Fantasy VII PS
- 2. SF Alpha 2 PS 3. Ten Pin Alley - PS
- 4. Resident Evil PS
- 5. Samurai Showdown 2 Neo•Geo



- 6. Nanotek Warrior PS
- 7. Fighting Vipers Saturn (Import)
- 8. Legacy of Kain PS
- 9. Overkill PS
- 10. Contra PS
- 6. Dark Savior Saturn
- 7. Crash Bandicoot PS
- 8. Tactics Ogre Super Famicom
- 9. Star Ocean Super Famicom
- 10. SF Alpha 2 Saturn
- 6. Puyo Puyo Tsu Saturn 7. KOF '95 - Saturn
  - 8. F1 PS
  - 9. Final Fantasy III SNES
  - 10. Phantasy Star I SMS

- 1. Policenauts PS
- 2. Fighting Vipers Saturn
  - 3. Deception PS 4. NiGHTS - Saturn

  - 5. Popolocrois PS
  - 1. Wave Race<sup>64</sup> Nintendo<sup>64</sup>
  - 2. Shadows of the Empire PS
  - 3. Wipeout XL PS

  - 4. Final Doom PS
  - 5. Super Mario<sup>64</sup> Nintendo<sup>64</sup>



6. Pilotwings64 - Nintendo64

9. KOF '96 - Neo•Geo

6. Virtua Fighter Kids - Saturn

10. Albert Odyssey - Saturn

8. Crash Bandicoot - PS

7. Star Ocean - Super Famicom

- 7. Tekken 2 PS
- 8. Powerslave Saturn
- 9. Deception PS
- 10. Star Gladiators PS
- 1. Nights Saturn
- 2. Dark Savior Saturn
- 3. Wave Race<sup>64</sup> Nintendo<sup>64</sup> 4. SF Alpha 2 - Saturn
- 5. Crash Bandicoot PS



- 6. Fighting Vipers Saturn
- 7. Three Dirty Dwarves Saturn
- 8. VF Kids Saturn 9. Madden '97 - PS/Saturn
- 10. CoolBoarders PS

All you have to do to enter the drawing is write down a list of your top 10 favorite games and the 10 games you want the most that aren't out yet, on a piece of paper or a postcard then send them to: GAMEFAN TOP TEN, 5137 Clareton Dr., Suite 210 Agoura Hills, CA 91301

First Prize: Your choice of a 32X, VIRTUAL BOY, or NOMAD.

# Second Prize:

Your choice of one of the Picks of the Month in Viewpoint.

A FREE year of GameFan! The best magazine in the universe!

Drawing is limited to One (1) entry per person per month. Drawings will be held on the 21st of each month. The three (3) winners will be notified by mail and listed on this page. For a complete list of rules and regulations write: GameFan Top Ten with self addressed & stamped envelope.

to last month's winners: First Prize:

David Maag, Sacramento, CA

**Second Prize:** Leonard Morency, E. Elmhurst, NY

**Third Prize:** 

Bryan Birchfield, Lakewood, CO



CHECK US OUT ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB, WHERE YOU'LL FIND INDUSTRY NEWS FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE FENCE - THE LATEST SHOTS OF THE HOTTEST GAMES, AND LOTS MORE!

AHIME

GAME MUSIC

GOSSIP

SCREEN SHOTS

QUICK TIME MOVIES

THE POSTMEISTER

TOP TEN

BREAKING NEWS

UP TO DATE INFO ON ALL THE HOTTEST **GAMES · THE LATEST** ANIME FROM COMPA-NIES LIKE MANGA AND AD VISION · NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD . GAME SOUND-TRACK TOP TENS . THE POSTMEISTER · AND MUCH MORE.



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pain, these are the rules to live by, hexen, beyond evil

beyond hope. beyond any 3-d game ever created.





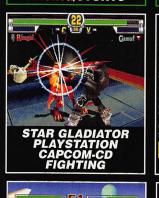


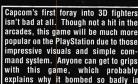




http://www.gtinteractive.com http://www.idsoftware.com







explains why it bombed so badly in the arcades. Expect Street Fighter style strategy or two million combo variations and you'll be disappointed. Whatever you may think of SG, you must check out the graphics. They are the best yet seen on a console fighting game, beating even *Tekken 2*!



arena; and fortunately they've delivered an astounding first effort in the 3D fighting pit. The introduction is of *Tekken 2* standard, and while the action is distinctly *Soul Edge*d (characters move at 30fps and weapons are motion blurred),

there's a whole new set of rules to learn here. No overbalanced characters, special attacks and combo chains aplenty and a huge cyber-samurai to face ensure that PlayStation owners have a polygon fighter that stomps all over the *Toshinden*s of this world from a great height. And those backgrounds... prepare to be amazed!



whole: Let's dance in the streets...
finally, a 3-D fighting game from
Capcom! They've finally acknowledged that 3-D is the only place to
be... death to 2-D! Uh, yeah. Sorry if
I seem a little bitter about this one. If

it played like a real fighting game I wouldn't be so miffed. For the 2-D Capcom fighting freak this game plays terribly, with a connect-the-dots combo system and a block button. The graphics and music, however, are beautiful. SG is simply the best-looking texture-mapped PS fighter. If you're a casual fighting game player, you can't go wrong.



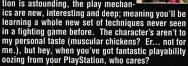






TOBAL NO. 1 PLAYSTATION SQUARE-CD **FIGHTING** 

A triumphant beginning to Square's surge onto the 32-bit consoles, as they deliver a supremely playable beat-'em-up with a huge dollop of questing on the side. Movement is motion-captured beauty, the introduction is astounding, the play mechanics are new, interesting and deep; meaning you'll be learning a whole new set of techniques never seen





I wasn't too impressed with *Tobal* No. 1, putting me in the minority here at GameFan. I do respect the way Dream Factory tried to completely reinvent the genre, but the gameplay seems to plod-

ding, slow, and deliberate, nowhere near as satisfying as Tekken or VF. The quest mode is cool, and the soundtrack and backgrounds are definitely awesome, but it's hard to get too excited about this one.



Simply unbelievable! game had come from Sega or Namco, I would understand... but no, then we wouldn't have the Akira Toriyama characters and

Chrono Trigger composer Yasunori Mitsuda. If you're searching for that 100% all-new fighting game experience look no further... as an original home fighting game, I could not possibly included the programment of the progra give this higher recommendation. If you know what's good for you, get *Tobal*!





P M (9) (9)

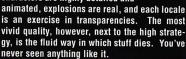


OVERKILL PLAYSTATION ACTION/ADVENTURE Until the final version arrived wasn't sure whether Konami had hit the big time with their first non-Japanese PS action/adventure. I'm now convinced they

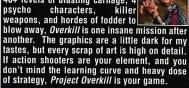
have. Overkill is not only finely tuned and balanced, but a godsend for those fond of extended play. You will get every dime out of this purchase. Hot rendered graphics, crazy transparencies, burnin' music. Another fine Konami effort.



Music that changes with the action is a great idea, and I'd love to see it used more often. I found myself thinking of Overkill as a sort of 2D Doom. Graphically, the characters are highly detailed and



P M **(7) (8)** (9) Bring on one of the longest, toughest, most violent shooters ever! Packed with a whopping 40+ levels of blasting carnage, 4







0 (8)





ISOMETRIC ACTION

Spot Goes to Hollywood is a gor geous game. It's packed with more art than any other two, and is brimming with high quality ani-The FMV is beyond mation.

description. Once you get passed the iso-control, which you can adjust, you'll be lovin' this simplistic yet satisfying action hopper. Tommy T's soundtrack adds an air of sophistication to the whole adventure. The first PS iso-actioner is a winner!



The game that would never be released is finally here, and perhaps the delay was a little too severe. The CG pre-rendered quality is second to none and there's plenty to find in the actual game, but this title (even at this hideously late stage) seriously lacks control; the most important point to consider when formulating a game. The isometric nature means that Spot jumps into and out of the screen while remaining the same size; meaning you can't judge distances at all; an infuriating problem that mars an otherwise slick but run-of-the-mill release. I'd personally bag a bandicoot instead...

4						
	G G		•)	M	lack	
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	•	(5)	6		(7)	

I really had gotten to a point where I thought 32-bit *Spot* was DOA, so it's good to see that he finally got his chance. Both the hand-drawn characters and rendered beckgrounds are of the

C

(8)

(8)



dered backgrounds are of the utmost quality, and the music is superb. The disappointment was in finally receiving the game; after the long wait, I found Spot to be much too average in many instances. A quality action game, just not the spectacle I was hoping for.







# PIFER

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LAP TIL

SHIFT 1 32Mph

This was a really cool game a year ago when it came out in Japan. 32-bit was still relatively new and no 3D platformers were available. Now however, we've seen what the PS can do and so, Floating Runner

seems less of a game. It's still pretty cool though-limited, but cool. Platform gamers will enjoy its vast areas, high-res graphics and chock full o' hoppin' gameplay. I just wish the camera looked out a little further.

C P M O **(7)** (7)

(7) (7)

As far as heli games go (and they usually don't go very far with me), Black Dawn is at the top of my list. The gameplay is big on changing altitude constantly and blasting away at ground and air targets. The t-mapped, polygonal enemy and allied forces look splendid and the game's sound-track is beyond great. It's not very realistic (planes fly slow and collisions do not cause "game over"), but if a game like this was, it'd be nearly unplayable... like those true simulations... that I hate! Hot game. The chief's wrong! that I hate! Hot game. The chief's wrong!

C P M O (9) (8) (9)

Time Commando looks good but the gameplay is an exercise in pain. The word cumbersome comes to mind and sticks like

crazy glue the whole time you're

playing. Take these pre-rendered stiffoids and put them out to pasture. The FMV bgs are nicely detailed but move along at a shudderingly slow pace and the whole game just screams why bother. I will say this, however: That intro is one hot piece of work!

C P M O (4) (5) (7)

licensed racing game... that's good? Wow, Mario himself must have helped tweak AR because it definitely is a good racer. If realism is your thing, not to mention

the diversity provided by two circuits, this is your game. Clipping is at a minimum, the control and the cameras are done just right and the options read like an operator's manual. Impressive!

C P M (8) (8) (7)

Visions of spending days on end parked in front of the tube sound good? Well, Psygnosis certainly has the game for such an occasion. F1 is without a doubt the finest F1 game ever created for a home console.
From the amazing tunes of Joe
Satriani (well, he did do the title track) to the accu-

racy down to the nose hair, this is as real as racing gets. Track conditions, weather, tires, aerodynamics, you name and it figures into the winning equation. Heck, if the driver had a cold that day, the game would probably sneeze. Amazing

C P M O (9)

I was hoping Steel Harbinge would come together a little better in its final stages but I still find the game very playable and worth your time. Miranda's animation is sore-

ly lacking with two frames on her jump, but the vast areas, search and destroy missions and cool lighting help save the day. Steel H. wins my award for cheesiest FMV intro however, with such an obviously staged production you'll be holding back the laughter. Check the FMV Miranda, and let it out!

C P M 7 (7)

Two words describe 1: Too late. While this game was somewhat (well, not really...) impressive many months ago,

the advent of Mario and Crash render it useless. If you want a charming lil' adventure, perhaps... but I, personally, just do not care.

G C P **(6)** (5) **(5)** (8)

Despite small clipping problems, Black Dawn's 3D environments are very impressive. The choppers and planes are super-detailed, and the explosions are wicked. The intensity level is set on high, with swarms of planes and choppers flying madly

about your vessel. Luckily the flight controls and weapons selection are perfect, seeing as how most missions involve both rescuing (Choplifter style) and dogfight shooting. The soundtrack is motion-picture quality Tallarico at his finest and heightens the gameplay experience immeasurably.

P C M<sub>y</sub> O<sub>y</sub> (8) (8) (9)

A little work and this could have been really good, which is the depressing part. I like the concept, I like the angle, if only the engine had been tuned. It's not that it's unplayable, it just takes

so much determination to stick through it. I did appreciate the diversity of the characters, all of which are nicely detailed, and each time period and its accompanying weapons were done with style.

C P M O

Unfortunately *Andretti* finds itself smack dab in the midst of *F1*. I

smack dab in the midst of F1.
realize they're two different
games, Andretti being the national
racer, and F1 the world circuit
racer, but to gamers they're both
racing games. Andretti is cool
because it offers both the Indy and Stock car circuits, with well over a dozen tracks for each, and
goes the extra mile by including various car
modifications. The control is very smooth and
the many cameras views are hot. Although second to F1, Andretti's one of the best around.

C<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> O<sub>2</sub> (8) (8) (8)

The UK's finest developers now bring you an astonishingly accurate simulation of 1995's F1 season. From the hoardings to the scenery, the car physics to the brilliant lack of pop-up, this shines through as a labor of love that should be nestling a new Burstein and location. This levi

in your PlayStation collection. This isn't just laborious learning of courses and 60+ lap races (unless you want it to be!); there's an arcade mode where running other cars off the track becomes second-nature! With all 17 courses featured here and more options than you could ever hope to need, you've got a sure-fire winner on your hands. Now hand me that joypad; Shumacher's going down this time.

C<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> O (10) 7

Steel Harbinger sent my heart a-racin'. I really like the shapely lead, Miranda. The game itself plays very well and has huge areas for you to explore as you reign terror on the aliens who've taken your humanity from you. Light sourcing abounds as you lay waste to

best game is right here. C P M O

all. The music's good, too. Mindscape's

I appreciate Xing's attempt last year at giving starved PS players over in Japan a 3D platforming experience. Here in the U.S. however, we are 2nd in line and having played games that far

surpass FR by now, a little of the initial luster is gone. Floating Runner is like a 32-bit classic. Good gameplay, last year's graphics. It's still has its moments though and remains a unique, albeit flat-shaded experience.

G C P M O (7) **(6)** (5) (7)

I hate to complain when I'm looking at such a quality game, but can someone talk to me about this whole fog system? It doesn't take from the game, which is more a pure shooter than a, dare I say ..

nah! No matter, there's plenty of military jargon for you warrin' types. The music is straight out of the movies and I really like the light sourcing. I do wish certain enemies moved along faster but I'll live... and they won't!

G, C, P, M, O 7 (8) (8)

I love the whole concept of *Time* Commando, but I think it needs a sequel with major refinements to find an audience. The whole scrolling, pre-rendered background idea is hot, and so too is the story-

line of time traveling in cyberspace, but unfortunately the play mechanics crush all hope for the game. The slo-mo play control, awful response time, and erred collisions literally drop this game from great to below average. Too bad, because so

(8)

C P M (4) (7)

much more could have been done.

Andretti is the first solid racing experience from EA for the PlayStation. A wide variety of options, a plethora of camera angles, tight control and good

music set the stage for one of the more diverse racers around. All 24 tracks offer lush scenery and little to no clipping. So,

what happened with Road Rash? M 0 8 8 7 **(7)** 

To put it simply, Psygnosis have cre-

lo put it simply, Psygnosis have created a masterpiece with Formula 1.
In terms of playability and depth no other racing game even comes close. F1 combines the speed and excitement of an arcade style racer with the skill and strategy of a full-blown Grand Prix competition. Add to that a humanogus number of tracks and onlines that

humongous number of tracks and options that should ensure plenty of late nights for months to come. If anything, F1 is so realistic it may actually prove to be to daunting for younger gamers. Definitely one for hard-core racing enthusiasts.

(10)

C, P, M, O, 9

(8)



This engine is pretty efficient, offering fluid 360° movement, and masks any would be clipping very convincingly. I found some collision woes here and there but for the most part, the gameplay is solid-seek and-destroy. Visually, SH has a lot going for it. Las Vegas especially caught my eye with its blinding neon lights. I found the FMV pleasantly B-movie-like and appreciate its near broadcast quality. SH is a game I'd buy.

C, P, M, O, **(7) (7)** 





ACTION/ADVENTURE





They learned everything from their parents. Except respect.





The next Virtua Fighter generation has been born. Trouble is, somebody forgot to teach them how to be nice little boys and girls. These kids kick. They smash. They nail combinations their VF parents can't, and would probably never approve of. But don't worry. The only spankings in this game will come in the form of well-placed body slams. And when it's all over, you'll have the privilege of saying you slapped around some pint-sized punk.



Only On



















your skills on. It's nice to give PlayStation own-

ers the chance to play new stages, especially

since you can't easily add additional ones like

on the PC. Just be warned, the set included in

Final is sure to give you many a sleepless night.

C P M O

For anyone expecting something

new, you might be disappointed.

It's the same Doom as before, but

if you've played the first to death,

Final contains a new collection of

specially-designed levels to test

As the last incarnation of Doom before it hits the 64th power, Final Doom for the time being reigns supreme. With hellish levels spawned from unholy fans and twisted programmers, FD is also

Happiness is *Tempest*. Witness the intense light-sourcing and lens flare

effects and drool. Play with unprece-

dented control, zero loading time, mind-blowing remixed tuneage, and melt into the best Web ever created.

This is the vintage Tempest I love, with

supercharged, high-powered PS-exclusive "X" modes, a psychedelic, eye-frying Trippy 2000 mode, and enhanced Bonus zones. Until the next time (N64,

pleeease!), *Tempest* has finally peaked in the X-zone, right here on your trusty PlayStation. There's simply no better way to lose your social life!

game that keeps me playing.



C P M

the toughest Doom I've ever played. Although the graphics are still pretty basic, there's loads of light sourcing, cool new textures, and a good frame rate. It's the size and difficulty of the



You just can't get a more fear-induc-ing, blood-splattered and gore-filled game than the great grandaddy of 'em all, and this update provides players with 32 more levels of constant com-

and you'll never put it down!

The Tempest legend continues! One of the most addictive and challenging (yet

cunningly simple) games of all time

finally gets a 32-bit look in, and thank

fully they've really gone to town in every single way possible! For the crusties, there's original *Tempest* to play (wow, those vector graphics are amazing!), the Atari version's

in there (anyone want to buy a Jaguar?) and there's even a couple of 32-bit improvements into the bargain!

Add Trippy mode (please stop this feature, I must lie down) and you're set for weeks at a time! Pick this up

C P M O

Sure, there's some graphical anomalies (and half as many levels as the PC version), but PlayStation owners can rejoice with more DeathMatch action (the most addictive two player game ever!) and enough cunning in level design to keep all but the most demonic player happy for days! The best Doom until the big one...





ago. The gameplay (in terms of racing ala *Daytona*, or say *Wipeout*) holds little merit, as getting around the tracks fast takes nary any skill.

(8)

Impact Racing looks like a game

that should have come out a year

No, it's shootin' you'll do to progress, while trying to race at the same time. Executed properly, this might work, but here it just falls short. The music and overall presentation are a slick package. But someone opened it and let the gameplay out.



JVC's stalwart attempt to foray into the world of racing (with Wipeout elements thrown in for good measure) has some interesting touches, but many factors which let it down. The biggest drawback is the fact that I'd just finished a solid

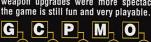
week of joy playing *Wipeout XL* when I sat down to this title, and the ease of completion, lack of course width or imagination, nondescript announcer and rough scenery had me screaming for my Psygnosis CD back. However, with perseverance I managed a moderately exciting race or two, but nothing to entice me back to the Impact track.



I liked this game a lot. Ever since Crash 'n Burn, I've always been a sucker for driving shooters. And much like C'nB, success in Impact

hacing isn't predicated by incredible driving skills; it's more of a blaster than anything else. The graphics are pretty good, although the car appears to float sometimes, and the techno tunes are some of the best I've heard all year. I only wish the weapon upgrades were more spectacular, but







POWERSLAVE SATURN PLAYMATES-CD

Powerslave... the Doom alternative! I'm happy to say that this is not a clone. Set in mythological times in the land of Pharaohs, Powerslave presents the corridor gamer with new weaponry, new

2D gaming the way it oughta be!

Take awesome hand drawn art,

line scrolling and parallax back-grounds, play mechanics 'til the cows come home, hot 3D (and

truly awesome) bosses, wrap it in

play mechanics, like swimming and jumping, and has the hottest light sourcing you've ever seen on the Saturn. The controls and interface are equally impressive. A finely produced piece of software!

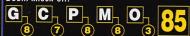


a cooool soundtrack and you've got one burnin' 2D Saturn game. Besides being the first real enhancement in 2D beat-'em-up play mechanics in years, 3DD is just a gas to play and it's got hordes of artfully delicious levels.

C P M O

Impressive! I'm as tired of Doom clones as anyone, but this is really the first good one on Saturn, easily blowing away Robotica and Alien Trilogy. The lighting effects are spectacular, and the game

moves at a nice, fast pace. I just wish that they'd have tried a little harder to do something original... They clearly have the pro-gramming skill to do more than just another Doom knock-off.



sports, lumbering along picking up their fallen pals as they get pummelled by enemies I can't describe. And that's the first ten seconds of 3DD! The gameplay reaches unexpected diversi-

M<sub>1</sub>O<sub>1</sub>

Creative minds are working over-

time at the Appaloosa HQ. 3DD is

one of the craziest games I've ever seen. Who'd-a thunk it? A bunch

of dwarf-like smellies, loaded

down with gear from an array of

ty and hilarious thrills from that point on.

A Doom-style adventure smothered in creeping Egyptian terror awaits!
There's a lot more movement than
Doom (you look up, down and jump for
a start), and there's light-sourcing on

a start), and there's light-sourcing on the projectiles that'll make you shudder in delight. Huge sprawling levels, a new slant on gameplay (you can return to previously explored zones to uncover more secrets) and the perfect capturing of the Egyptian mythos mark this game out from the pack. Thoroughly enjoyable, but be warned; miss a jump and you'll fry, and the US saturn joypad renders any complex maneuver (such as circling an opponent) almost impossible....





G, C, P, M, O

Gimme some sugar! SegaSoft has just single-handedly brought 2D joy back to life on the Saturn! Everything in 3DD, from start to finish, involves the Saturn showcas-

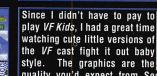
ing its 2D superpowers. Make no mistake, with 15 solid levels of side-scrolling linistate, with 13 sond levels of side-scholing beat-'em-up mayhem, 3DD is a heck of a good game... but check out those graphics! Line scrolling, mad scaling, beautiful animation, and bosses too cool to believe. Hot 3-player gameplay tops off the wish list. Check 3DD out NOW!





C P M O





I like it - I like it a lot.

watching cute little versions of the VF cast fight it out baby style. The graphics are the quality you'd expect from Sega and the music and CG, well, Sega! Would I buy VF Kids? Probably not. It's a clone of a game I'm done with. But I'd borrow it from a friend and never return it.



Taken as a complete fighting game, this is a truly seminal piece of work; you've got cool cutesy characters with awe-some facial expressions; deep, deep gameplay and numerous hilarious cheats (such as Dural's goldfish-bowl head!). However, this is also identical to Virtua Fighter 2 regarding play mechanics and this is

the main reason why I can't recommend it unequivocally. For those without *Virtua Fighter 2* in their collection, ly. For those without Virtua Figiner 2 in their consequent I'd recommend VF 2 over this (I prefer my puglists with the usual-sized craniums), and for those already in postulate with It there's little extra here.



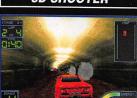
VF Kids is hyper cute, and good fun for you and a bunch of friends to screw around with. The charac-ter models are cool, the arranged soundtrack is cool and the endings are a neat surprise. But really

this game is just a new coat of paint on an old title, sort of like having to pay for *VF Remix* after buying *Virtua Fighter 1*. It's a must for true VF-ophiles, but everyone else might just want to rent it.





FINAL DOOM PLAYSTATION WILLIAMS-CD **3D SHOOTER** 



IMPACT RACING RACING/SHOOTING



ACTION/ADVENTURE



ACTION PLATFORM





# SUDDENLY, THINGS ARE GETTING PERSONAL.

Now, it's your reputation on the line.

And time to leave your mark in this perfect translation of the #1 arcade phenomenon. On your side is the innovative custom combo system, now allowing you to link together your own series of brutal attacks.

You'll need every possible advantage to take on a total of 18 fighters, the most ever in Street Fighter legend.

Remember, hesitation is deadly.

Because in the end, it's all about who's the last one left standing.







**CAPCOM** 

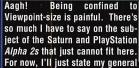




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**FIGHTING** 



For now, I'll just state my general opinion: SFA2 on the Saturn, despite it's numerous flaws, it slightly better than the PlayStation version. Look for my in-depth comparison between the arcade, Saturn and PS versions of Alpha 2 next month!



Grid Runner is the first 32-bit puzzle action game with graphics and music good enough to hold my interest. The gameplay is brilliantly simplistic and two

player games are big on fun. The freedom offered by the ability to lay out grids is cool and the game has a polished feel from the graphics, through the gameplay, all the way to the music and effects.



While Trilogy is a solid corridor game, it's another PS hand-medown designed to run best on the Sony machine. It's a good game here too, but the balance seems off to me. I don't mind hard games

but when you're down to the pistol in this one it's pretty much over. I'd also like to see Ripley, not just the tip of her guns. If you like a lot of strategy in your 3D, pick up a motion tracker, otherwise see Powerslave.



I settled back and prepared to play what looked like the next Resident Evil. A couple hours later I sold my copy used (barely) and picked up the new Ghouls & Ghosts puzzle game. I'm much happier with it. Overblood does everything a game in this genre peads to survive waren. Totalene

needs to survive... wrong. Tedious empty puzzles, hurtin' battles and an overall feeling of drowsiness abounds the further you progress in the game. A shame, the engine works OK and the graphics are pretty good. Overblood could have been a great game with 6 more months of development.



l don't have enough space to tell you

don't have enough space to tell you how much of a disappointment Samirai 3 is. But instead, I can tell you the good aspects of the game... er.. um.. well it certainly has the music (but its streamed). The choppy animation (3 frames! ARRGHI) and the loading time (ZZZZZZ...) will have you wondering if this title is even worth buying. Even the hard-core Samurai fan should avoid it like the plague. Don't even think of contaminating your precious PlayStation with this abhorrent translation of a game. Do what I did. Pull out your Kendo stick, pummel this abomination of a game and go play KOF '95 instead.



I never really thought they could do it, but here it is... Fighting Vipers on the Saturn. And, wonder of wonders, it's pretty awesome. Not only

ders, it's pretty awesome. Not only do you get a very good translation of the arcade game but several unique modes and the option to actually change the game's arcade balance to a new, more equal setting, something EVERYONE needs to listen to (Capcom!). Even if you've never played the arcade game, which I'll bet few of you have, don't be put off by the fruity characters; give this one a try. You'll be happy you did...



Orion appears in the print mag! Umm... Street Fighter Alpha 2... Just like the PlayStation version, but with better animation touches, a better intro, and with

the Saturn pad (better control).

But, just like *Alpha 1* for the Saturn, it has worse sound effects and voice. And though this version is a bit better than PlayStation Alpha 2, you really can't really go wrong either way. For 60 bucks this is about as arcade-perfect as you're going to get.



I place Grid Runner in the same category with Bomberman: I find them barely tolerable in one-player mode, but they excel as multi-player games. The Saturn version is a little rougher graphi-

cally, but makes up for it in improved depth, character size, and background animation. If you can get past the cheesy intro, give it a go. The single player game is a good challenge, it just wasn't my thing.



A highly commended effort by the peo-ple of Probe, which convincingly entices you into the role of Ripley as she stalks xenomorphs along dark cor-ridors. Speaking of dark corridors, I found those passageways just a little too black and claustrophobic; we all

know there's polygon clipping going on, and this is the lazy way to hide it. Despite the amazing thrill and fear generated by those enemies, they're still remarkably 2D and have an unfortunate tendency to pixellate horribly up close. The closeness and tension of the films is accurately portrayed, though.



"Trust me," I told everyone, "this one's going to be hot." I could just feel it in my bones. Cool storyline. Amazing engine. What could go wrong? Just about everything, actually. The move-

ment in this game is awful, the later levels are super glitchy, the storyline is pretty stupid, the battles suck, and it's really boring. Some of the settings are breath-taking, but playing through this one is a chore.

0 C M 7 **(6) (7)** 

Ugh. One of the worst translations ever, and not just because of that Nick Rox special, missing frames. This game is SLOW. Slow, choppy

and framey. It's simply unplayable and has no redeeming qualities. Also, what's up with seeing everyone's ending from the option screen?? Stay away.



Now that I can enjoy Fighting Vipers in the comfort of my own home, I've come to two conclusions. One: this is a spectacular translation. Two: Fighting Vipers is a much better game than I ever used to give it

credit for. This is the most satisfying 3D fighting game (in the sense of "wow, I'm really beating someone to death!") I've ever played, and the variety in characters and fighting styles is very respectable. A must-own Saturn title.



I pity those who've just shelled out big bucks for Street Fighter Alpha, because





I've been overcome by Grid Running! It's not the type of game that'll blow you away graphically, but the gameplay quickly pulls you in and keeps you glued for hours. I preferred the Saturn version





Alien Trilogy is available as I write this, and I am not particularly fond of the game. The PS version was only okay, but now, with the Saturn version's inferior 3D, the game looks chunky, un-finished, and

slow. I miss the transparencies, light sourcing, and smoother scrolling of the PS version. Sadly, the gameplay is repetitious and the enemy Al is a joke. You want real Saturn corridor 3D power?



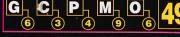
When we all first saw this game in Japanese magazines, we just knew it was going to be awesome. This point was further solidified by a videotape demo a few weeks

later. I mean, this engine was amazing to say the least. When the game arrived, however... the quest couldn't possibly hope to match the visuals. It's too bad, really, because I desperately wanted to like



Boy, was I glad to be out of range of the Nick Rox detonation when he began playing this one! Being a huge Shodown fanatic (yep, I bought the cartridge version of the first gamel), I was frothing with delight as the PlayStation port-over of Samurai 3 neared completion (especially after the awesome KOF '95 conversion), and then the weeping began... Yep, this is Samurai Slowdown and no mistake, with extra added insult in the shape of great chunks of missing animation. The breaking point came when I found that you can select the final stage and beat the game in one round. I want the people responsible rounded up, placed against a wall and shot. How could they do this..?

P M 0



As a conversion of a coin-op, Fighting Vipers more than excels; it delivers astonishing 3D graphics and in-depth

astonishing 30 graphics and in-depth gameplay, including vicious ringouts, and a whole host of secrets. 
Taking the already awesome game mechanics of VF and tweaking bits here and there, Sega has brought you a whole new tribe of polygon pugilists, and despite looking like glam-rock rejects, they certainly know how to stag each other about the ring! And hey, this is the only game where you can undress as you fight; what greater recommendation do you need?





ACTION/PUZZLE



ALIEN TRILOGY SATURN FOX INTERACTIVE-CD **3D ADVENTURE** 



**OVERBLOOD** PLAYSTATION RIVERHILL SOFT-CD ACTION/ADVENTURE

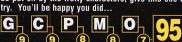


**FIGHTING** 



FIGHTING VIPERS SEGA-CD **FIGHTING** 









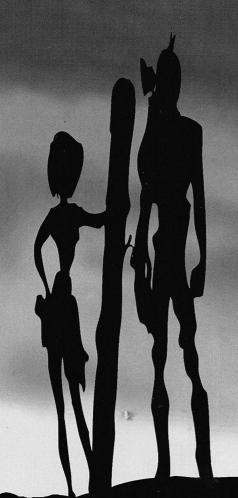






60,000 frames of animation later our artists were getting a little ticked off. After all, EWJ only had 3,000 frames and back then, we thought that was a lot. Can we pull off the most animated game ever? Time will tell...

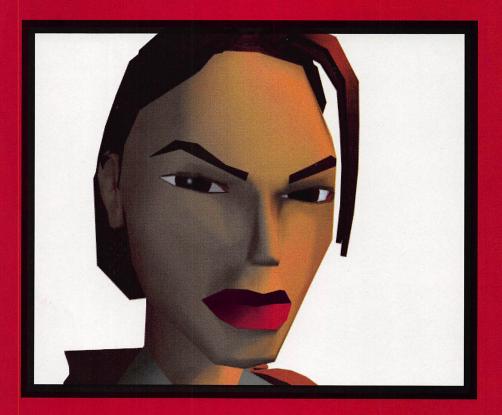
— The Shiny Team



RP

http://www.shiny.com











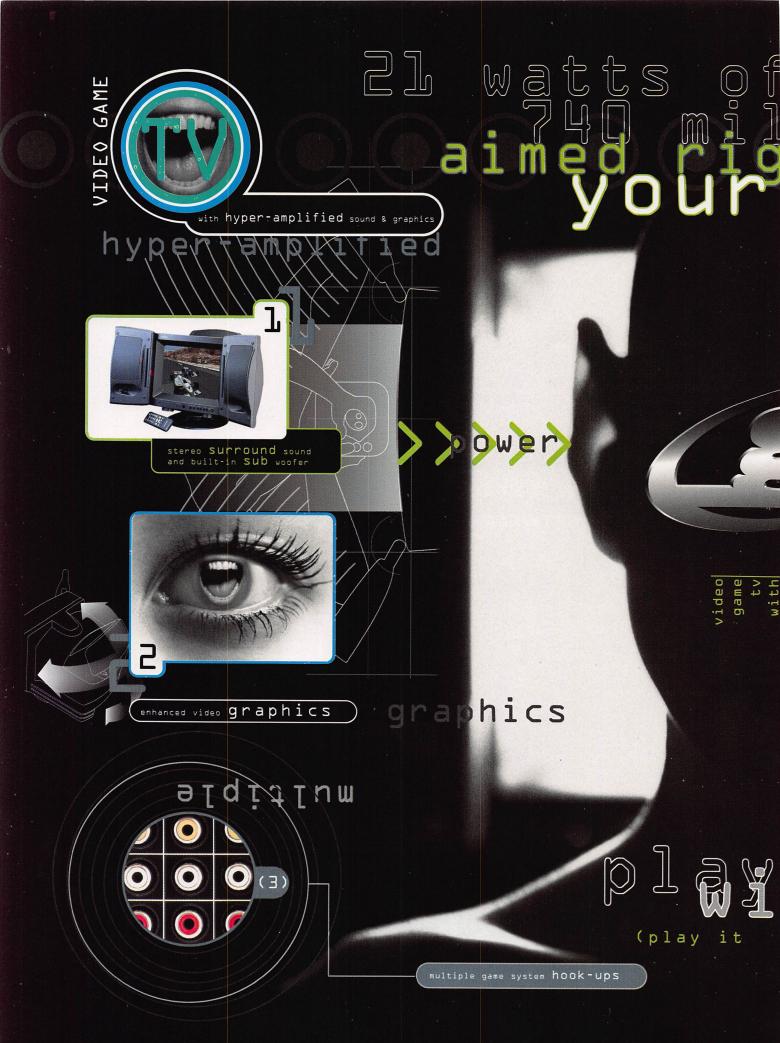


YOU KNOW HOW IT REALLY HURTS TO GET KICKED RIGHT BETWEEN THE LEGS? WUSS.

TOMBRAIDER

CIDOS

COMING SOON



sound power hour hour eardrums



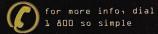
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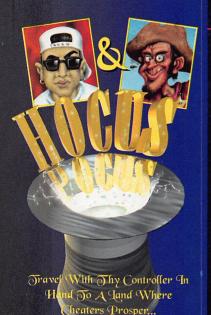
hyper-amplified sound graphics



de open











Third Prize!
1 Year
Sub. to
GameFant

Send in your codes... good, bad, or ugly. We'll look 'em over and choose one grand prize winner each month. Codes cannot come from a previously published US magazine. Winners will be drawn each month and displayed here in Hocus Pocus, the only place where cheaters prosper. (Current subscribers who win a sub. will receive a one-year extension.)

Nintendo GameBoy system!!

# CONGRATULATIONS

To this month's winners:
First Prize: Shirley Lu
Rowland Heights, California
Second Prize: Neal Austria
Pequannock, New jersey
Third Prize: Michael Ramirez
La Puente, California

SEND YOUR CARDS AND LETTERS TO Hocus Pocus

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# OPTION MODE DIFIGULTY AAAAAAAA THE LIMIT OF TURNO SPEED AAAAAAAA SHORT CUT OFF SCREEN SIZE SATURH SOUND HODE HORO DEFAULT PRESS A-BH-C DATA RESET PRESS A-BH-C CONFIGURATION PRESS A OR C APPENDIX PRESS A OR C





# SHIRLEY LU ROWLAND HEIGHTS, CALIFORNIA

We were shocked to receive an awesome Debug code for *NightWarriors* (Nick Rox is said to be in 'critical but stable' condition). To start, set the system clock to January 24, 1998, load the game and execute the Appendix code (choose configuration in Option Mode and press B, X, Down, A, Y). Then in Option Mode, enter these commands quickly under the appropriate item (you'll hear a spot effect chime when they're input correctly):

Difficulty: X, X, Right, Y, Z
Turbo Speed: X, X, Right, A, Z
Screen Size: A, C, Y, Y, Up
Default: Y, X, Left, A, B
Configuration: B, X, Down, A, Y
Appendix: X, X, Down, B, C

Once you've completed the new Appendix code, you'll hear Gallon howl. Now reset the system and start a normal game with a difference...



This new debug mode is activated during the game, and enables the following to be activated:

Show Damage:

Square Frame:

Start Ending:

Stop Energy Loss:

Stop Time Clock:

Unlimited Specials:

Down + R + X

Down + R + X

Down + R + X

Down + R + Z

Down + R + A

Down + R + B

Down + R + B

Good hunting people, let more Darkstalking begin!



# LEGEND OF OASIS SEGA SATURN TWO PLAYER MODE?!

Want a doppelganger of Leon to join the first player? All you need to do is to be in an area with no enemies about. Press the Z button to summon weapon select, then hold down the L Shift button and the X button. When released, another Leon appears for the second player to control. Should you wish to dispel him, perform exactly the same process.



NEAL AUSTRIA PEQUANNOCK, NEW JERSEY







# PEPSIMAN

For Dural's mutant brother, beat the game on the Very Hard setting with any character. Once accomplished, return to the main menu and scroll down until you hit the white option screen. Hit Start and you can select the stage, no damage and view character portraits as well as selecting Pepsiman in your future battles!

# Kumachan

To control to mutant offspring of Kuma and Genma (Ranma's dad), follow the exact instructions for selecting Pepsiman and you'll also be able to select this great lolloping teddy bear, or a beachball panda for those wishing another color.

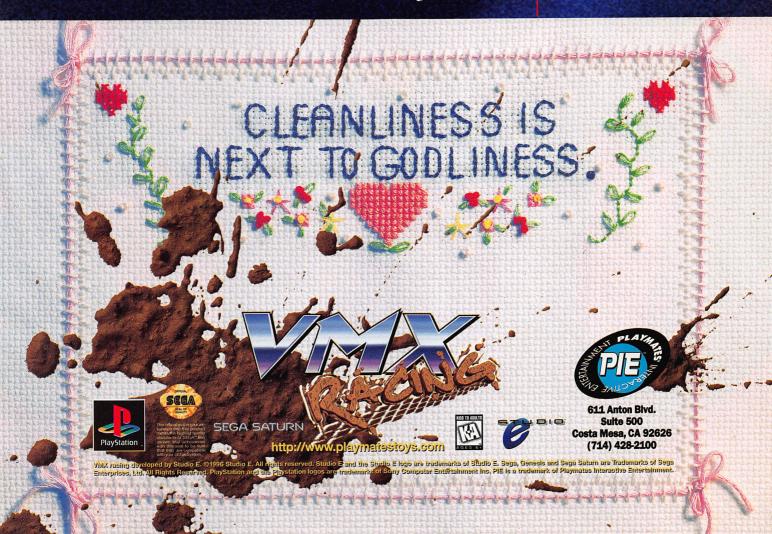
# HONEY'S NEW OUTFIT

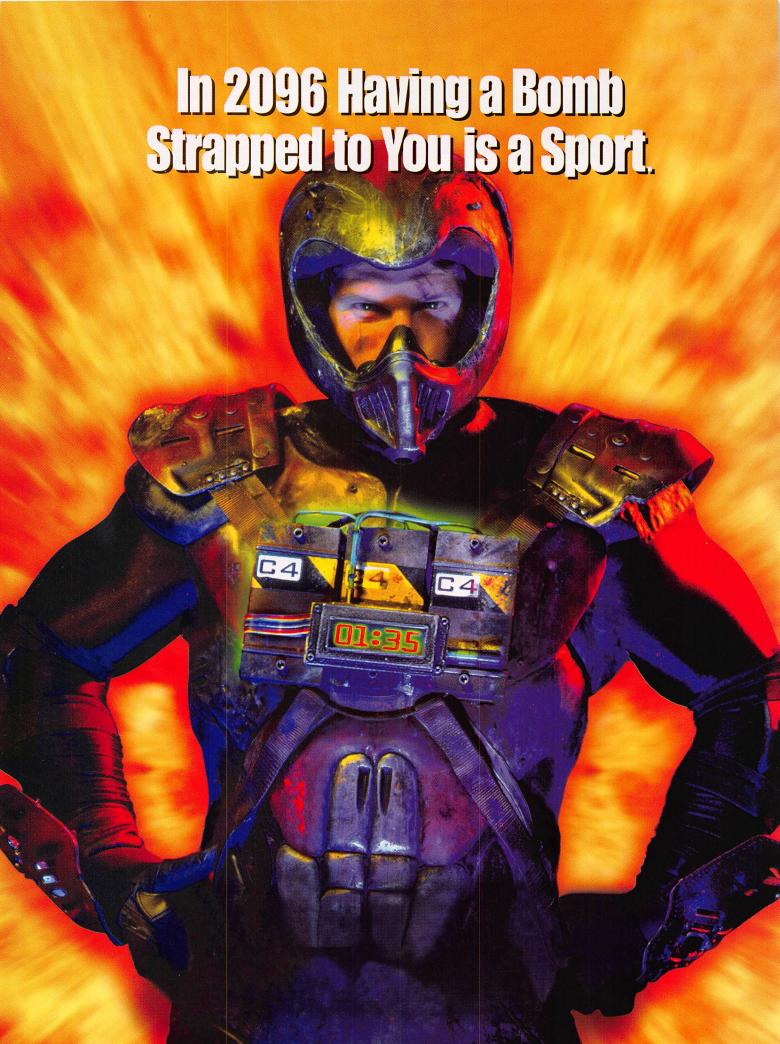
Fancy some Sailor Moon outfits for Honey? You will when you see them! To obtain this fashionable attire, complete the game on Very Hard with Honey, then go to the Versus screen. From here you'll notice two sets of clothes for two different Honeys! Both pack a nasty punch, and Honey's new outfit can only be shown off in Versus mode.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS MONTH'S SUPER HOCUS POCUS GIVERNAV WINNERS! KEEP SENDING THOSE TRICKS IN!

ATTENTION WER USERS!
SEND CODES AND TRICKS
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# MICHAEL RAMIREZ LA PUENTE, CALIFORNIA





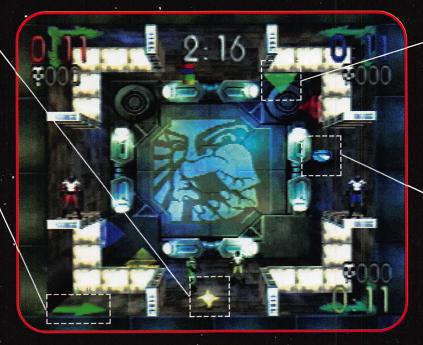
# (Want to Play?)

# The Crystal

Drop it in your reactor to increase your time.

# The Kickers

Kicking these rotates the chamber 90 degrees.



# The Reactors

Drop the crystal in an opponent's reactor to drain his Kill-Clock.

# The Power-Ups

Hi-Jumps:
Crystal Bombs:
Mercuries: Mag
Boots & more.



Your arena is a rotating chamber...
Turn it left. Turn it right.
Turn the wall into a floor.



Your goal is survival...
In this multiplayer deathmatch, it's every man for himself.



Your opponent is time...
Because when your clock hits zeroa
you're cooked.



The 3-D Rotatable Deathmatch















STREET-FIGHTER-ZERO 2— SEGA SATURN (IMPORT) — EVIL RYU, SUPER TURBO ZANGIEF AND CHUN LI





Evil Ryu is available to play in the Saturn SFA2! For those in the dark, you must highlight Ryu, press and release Start, move Right to Adon, Up to Gouki, Down to Adon and Left to Ryu. Hold Start and press any buttons for Ryu with Gouki's power!



Along with Super Turbo Chun-Li (see code for PlayStation version, there's two Street Fighter 2 original characters (without a super gauge) in this version of SFA2! For Zangief, highlight him, press and release Start and then move down to Sagat, left to Nash, up to Ryu, right to Ken and down to Zangief. Now hold Start and press any button for this Russian bear!









# SAMURAI-SHODOWN-3

is Dhalsim. Highlight his portrait, press and release Start, left to Zangief, down to Sagat, right to Nash, then up to Dhalsim. Hold Start and press any button for this yogic fakir!

SONY PLAYSTATION (IMPORT) THE DEVIL RIDES OUT...





Despite the much wailing and gnashing of teeth at the hideous translation of a great Neo•Geo fighter we're still more than happy to reveal to you how to obtain the big boss; Zankuro. Go to the character select screen, highlight Haohmaru, then move Left to Basara, Down to Kyoshiro, Right to Rimururu, Up to Haohmaru, Right to Shizumaru, Down to Nakoruru, Right to Amakusa, Up to Gaira and Left to Shizumaru (easy, eh?). When the clock countdown reaches 03, press Square, Circle, X and Start all together. With any luck, the huge frame of Zankuro should appear...





BUNNY

MICHAEL JORDAN



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**NOVEMBER 15** 

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# STREET FIGHTER ZERO 2 — SONY PLAYSTATION (IMPORT) — SUPER GOUKI, DAY-GLO FIGHTERS, SUPER TURBO CHUN LI, EXTRA COLORS, ZANGIEF'S POSE







For the ultimate version of the ultimate warrior, highlight Gouki, press and release Select. Then press Down to Adon, Right to Chun-Li, Right to Guy, Down to Rolento, Left to Sakura, Down to Rose, Left to Birdie, Down to Gouki, Right to Vega, Right to Dan and then (finally!) Right to Gouki. Then hold down Select and press a button for a Gouki with increased damage, double air fireballs, and standing fierce two-in-ones!



Fancy controlling the Super Turbo version of Chun-Li? All you have to do is move the cursor to Chun-Li and press and hold Select for five seconds. After the allotted time, the first lady of street fighting changes her attire (my, what beautiful tights!) and becomes her old self once more. The only differences we've spotted are her fireball (charge motion), some changes in her two-in-ones, and she remains differently clothed for her ending.



Here's a couple of strange fellows; a day-glo Vega and an all-white Dhalsim. To obtain these weird character glitches, enter Training mode, execute a teleport move, and in midwarp pause the game, go to the menu, select Normal and you'll begin your next fight with this glitched version of your character. All the shadow and projectile moves are differently colored, but otherwise they play exactly the same. Also remember; teleporting again reverts your character back to their original hue...

















Thankfully the PlayStation version of *Street Fighter Alpha 2* features six different costume changes (doesn't Dan look great in his fluorescent blue jogging gi?). At the character select screen (in Versus or Training mode), highlight your fighter and press one of the following: 1 punch, 1 kick, both punches, both kicks, square & X, or triangle & circle. Now your fighting can become all the more colorful!

MATTHEW WU BROOKLYN, NEW YORK



For Zangief's original arcade introduction in each bout of fighting; press and hold down Select before the bout begins (this only works in Versus or Training modes). Now the man-mountain swishes his cape!





There are two kinds of people in the world. Those who wear pink. And those who see red. If you're in the second category, you know other racing games just aren't up to speed. So hit the Burning Road."



our kick ass vehicles scream over three savage tracks. Wipe-out weather conditions rock your world. Choice of automatic or manual transmission puts you in controlwhile ample opportunities to slam or be slammed hurl you out of it. From there on in, your performance is not a pretty picture. Especially when you consider all the visible damage left behind. Toss blazing arcade quality action and 4 distinct camera angles into the mix for the ultimate roadkill recipe. And unlike those other games where you may never know what hit you, Burning Road's entire replay mode plays the whole race start to finish-not just lap highlights.



So trash the tutu and strap on a helmet. Because with Burning Road, you're an accident waiting to happen ...but not for long.

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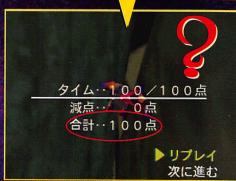






Rocket Belt

Want an awesome way to earn yourself 100 points for simply crashing into the ground? Well, look no further! This weird cheat only works with the Rocket Belt, and only on the two levels where you move the giant green ball into the vortex (Course B, mission 3 and Course P, mission 2). Launch from your pad and find a unused target area (marked with yellow and black hashed lines) and hover about 30 meters over it. Let your fuel run down (preferably by employing the blue hover boosters) until you receive both the warning messages. You'll run out of gas and plummet earthwards, hitting the ground hard and tumbling to a halt. Then the screen will turn white and you'll receive an 'out of area' message in Japanese and then, as if by magic, you'll receive 100 points for this disaster! Beats hitting a green balloon for half an hour!



# Jyrocopter





Pilotwings 64 is now the finest flyer ever; especially since there's a really weird glitch to discover while in Gyrocopter mode! Choose any competitor and go to any Gyrocopter stage (without any crosswinds blowing). Take off, fly straight ahead and keep accelerating until you reach 250kph. Then hold accelerate and watch your craft rise slowly to 500 meters. As soon as this altitude is reached, pull back hard on your 3D stick and watch as your Gyrocopter launches into the sky. You'll start to slow down dramatically, but keep holding back until your height reaches 630 meters. The second this happens, push forward on the 3D stick and you'll be shocked to see your craft lose height slightly but then climb to insane levels! The camera will zoom in on the Gyrocopter and then spin around to give a full face view of your pilot, and then the craft will move further away from the camera view and up into the stratosphere. Keep going and you'll reach 9999 meters and 999kph! Stop at around 1000 meters and wrestle with the 3D stick to create the glitching masterpieces seen below! Warning!! Once at 9999 meters, your game will crash!!



























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2 1/2

急% 7





Look at all those hats! Wonder how we made all of them? Well, go to any level where Mario loses his cap (the desert or this snow zone) and make the plumber lose his hat. Watch where the hat lands, but don't pick it up. Instead, go to a warp (like the tree shown below) and then run back to your hat. Once you're there, tip-toe slowly to the



A variation on this cheat enables Mario to continue his merry way around this snow level with his hat in his hand! Do the routine for obtaining two hats (explained to the right), and when you're creeping to collect the hats, grab both of them at the same time. With luck you'll pick

one, then Mario stops in the middle

of putting on the other hat!!

headgear and Mario will grab it ("Here we go!"), but there'll be another hat underneath it! Be careful not to run into these two hats or you'll pick both of them up. Now there'll be two hats (one left behind and one on your head!), so repeat the hat loss routine (get the hat blown off, watch where it lands, warp and return again), pick up the second hat and you'll find another one under it!! You can repeat this 50 times for fifty hats, when, finally, the game shuts down!







**62230** 

ANYONE WANT A HAT?
YOU CAN-A HAVE ANY
COLOR AS LONG AS IT'SA RED! THANK-A YOO
SO MUCH-A!

23

**8** 🕉







Want to kill Bowser in seconds every time you meet him? I thought so! Firstly, grab that big dinosaur's tail as if you were going to spin him, but then let go immediately. Then position yourself just in front of him (see picture two), and when he's at about that distance, press your attack button right away; Bowser instantly moves in front of you, with you grabbing his tail! Now keep moving him toward the bombs and you'll destroy him in no time at all!

You've all seen that penguin challenge you to a race. Perhaps you thought he was a little undernourished? Well don't worry; once you've collected all 120 stars, he'll bloat out to three times the size! Why?











Having trouble on those sheer slopes? Well you don't have to worry any longer; good ol' Mario must have anti-gravity dungaree kneepads on; because when you crawl on flat ground next to these slopes (blue P switch and first snow level for example), he'll continue to move up the slopes without sliding for as long as you'll let him!





IT'S READY-ARE YOU?







"It's-a the
Princess! Sigh!"
Hope you've
spotted this window (left) and
viewed Mario
from behind this
strange place
(right)!









That's gotta hurt! Only those with enough skill can get Mario up to the very top of the castle! Look at the view!











Getting tired of that Penguin's cheeping? Throw him down the chimney! That'll teach him! Also try diving near the little feller and he'll copy you! How cute!









Time to die in mid-slide!! Start the Big Mountain slide, get to between the second and third blue coins and swing right. Bounce onto the wood and jump again onto the bottom part of the track. If you make it, you'll die in mid-slide, but the maneuver takes real skill!

Fancy a wander around the roof of this section? Simply sideflip near to the upstairs double doors and you'll leap onto a sea of blue where a short walk ends in a slide back down to earth!



Big Mountain slide time! Start your race as usual, but at the first tunnel, halt your sliding (by pressing down and jump kicking backwards). Go back far enough and the track'll disappear!







Just how did we get Mario up here? Once again, we aren't telling!



# SURVIVAL IS SIMPLE, NEVER STOP RUNNING.

"While graphics powerhouses come and go, it's titles like Grid Runner that focus on gameplay that have the potential to deliver long-term play to fans."

- Next Generation

"It's unique, challenging, and packed with addictive gameplay..."

-GAMEFAN

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- Ability to perform different magical spells



















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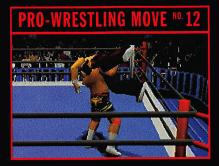
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LAYOUT - F. STORM



DEVELOPER - APPALOOSA

PUBLISHER - KONAMI

FORMAT - CO

# OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - N/A

available – november



E. STORM
THE LEGEND LIVES ON...



CONTRA IN 3D? IT CAN'T BE!... OR CAN IT? verything you know and love about Contra, one of the hottest video game series of all time, comes to life in this true to its roots first 32-bit version, Contra: Legacy of War. Any gamer worth his salt remembers at least one version of Contra, and those of us who've been pounding pads since 8-bit remember five burnin' console versions, not to mention the GameBoy titles. To date my favorite is the mind-blowing Genesis version, which remains today one of the most finely tuned and hardest games to beat.

The announcement that *Contra* was being developed for the PlayStation was received here at GF with great adulation. It's one of the three series we've grown accustomed to judging a new console by, the other two being *Ghouls and Ghosts* and

Castlevania (Castlevania will finally make its 32-bit debut this December in Japan and early next year here in America). The announcement that it was being developed by European developers, Appaloosa, however, was received with great concern. Contra has always been a Japanese-bred series. Would the relative newcomers from the UK be up to the task of sustain-

ing the legend? Well, it seems they are. In fact, considering how complete this version of

Contra is (not very), I'd venture to say it may be the best one yet. The game, as you can see, uses a vertically and horizontally scrolling 3/4-view polygonal engine. One would think this would totally conflict with the Contra style of gameplay. But au contraire, it works ever so well thanks to a team who've obviously done their homework. Two













## MY TRIP \* TO SEATTLE

BY CRASH BANDICOUT."



1. HERE'S ME DRIVING.



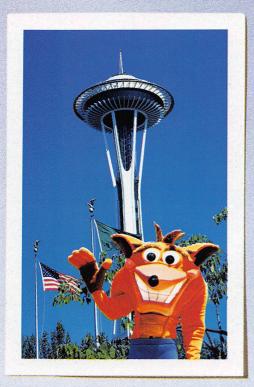
4. HERE'S ME SHOWING OFF MY GAME'S REAL-TIME 3-D WORLD WITH ITS LUSH, ORGANIC ENVIRONMENTS, TONS OF OBSTACLES, SECRET PATHWAYS AND BONUS LEVELS . OUTSIDE OF NENTENDO HEADQUARTERS.



5. HERE'S ME BEING ESCORTED OF THE PREMISES . BY SECURI

For game hints call 1-900-933-SONY(7669). The charge is \$0.95 per minute. Callers under the age of 18 must get parental permission to call. Touch-tone phone is required. Available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. U.S. only. The Sony Computer Entertainment logo is a trademark of Sony Corporation. PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. URNOTE is a trademark of Sony Interactive Entertainment Inc. "Crash Bandicoot" and the Crash Bandicoot logo are trademarks and copyrighted prop erties of Universal Interactive Studios, Inc. © 1996 Universal Interactive Studios, Inc. Source Code © 1996 Naughty Dog, Inc. Nintendo is a registered trademark of Nintendo of America Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Screen shots are actual game screens taken from monitors, www.sony.com.

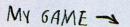




2. HERE'S ME AT THE SPACE NEEDLE.



3. HERE'S ME WITH SOME OF THE GALS AT SEATTLE SLIM'S.













Crash Bandicoot\* PlayStation. Sony's long-awaited entry into the platform game arena. You've never experienced anything quite as sensational as this fully animated cartoon world coming to life. It's flooded with obstacles, enormous levels, unbelievable graphics, detailed real-time lighting, amazing music and sound effects. Packed full of solid gameplay, hidden bonus levels, secret pathways and fiendish traps, this is the "must-have" game of the year. Travel in real time across 3D worlds in over 30 levels of intriguing gameplay with thousands of frames of animation! Interact with hilarious, fully rendered 3D cartoon-animated characters. It's packed with all the classic features of a character-based action



"A ball bounces. A pin drops. A man falls.

Gravity is the glue which binds us to our planet. We are about to apply the solvent which will free our species forever."

- Pierre Belmondo (Director of European AG Research) speaking at a demonstration of anti-gravity technology, Nevada, April 2035









SOAR THROUGH PSYGNOSIS' SENSATIONAL FUTURISTIC RACING EXPERIENCE





This is the next step forward...

've just spent the last week glued to my PlayStation, powering around anti-grav courses at speeds not experienced since scooting around the Ridge Racer Revolution tracks. Wipeout XL has arrived, courtesy of the Liverpool-based developers at Psygnosis. You all remember the first Wipeout, with sleek looks, great sound and cool gameplay? Well, taking this racing premise to the very extreme has resulted in this monster of a title, with the familiar logos and decals, those hypercool futuristic sleds and brain-numbing courses. So, is this the PlayStation's ultimate racing experience? Or is it just the old Wipeout with a new coat of paint slapped on? Read on and find out...













POWER THROUGH 8 ALL-NEW TRACKS AT NERVE-WRACKING SPEEDS!







0:46



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From the moment the rendered intro sets your heart a pounding (the finest seen since Namco's Tekken 2), you know you've reached racing Nirvana; barring any hideous mishaps between now and the finished release (I've just been physically dragged away from an 80% complete version), I can safely say this is the most fun I've ever had with a racing game. First off, the game moves slower than the easiest courses in the first Wipeout, leading some GameFan staff to scratch their heads in puzzlement. Enquirer had shown his racing prowess however, the game changed modes, the difficulty was upped, and the game got

very fast indeed. So quick in fact, that you'll sit there open-mouthed and unable to believe the PlayStation is able to shift as many polygons at

these speeds!

You'll cruise around the first couple of tracks admiring the scenery, looking for pop-up (cunningly hidden behind huge billboards or corners) and find that the 3D engine is perhaps the most realistic

ever seen. Of course, racing sleds haven't been invented yet, but if they did exist; they'd move exactly like those featured in Wipeout XL. You know it! You'll bob and weave, toast a few sleds that stray too close to your craft, and generally gawk at how clean, detailed and first rate all the textures look.

Then you'll discover the gameplay enhancements. importantly, if you take a corner badly, instead of glancing into a wall and stopping completely (like in the first Wipeout), you'll scrape the electric fence, sparks shoot out from the sides of your sled

and you'll ricochet into the race again with little speed loss. The addition this makes to your gaming pleasure cannot be fathomed, and the single most important reason why Wipeout XL is so much more playable this time around. You can now take corners more ferociously, knowing

that you'll hit some bends head on (and crunch your AVAILABLE - OCTOBER craft to a halt), but hoping for a scrape as you powerslide round before grappling to straighten out again.

Wipeout continues overleaf...







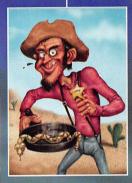
DEVELOPER - PSYGNOSIS

PUBLISHER - PSYGNOSIS

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1 OR 2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE



CHIEF HAMBLETON WHOOOAAAAH! THIS IS FAAAAASST!



O:31.e

REFINED ENERGY WEAPONS CAPABILITY **GUARANTEES YOU TOTAL ANNIHILATION!** 

O:12.<sub>3</sub>









"Okay... so I press this to accelera.... whoooaaa, this is fast!! Hand me the controls, I'm going for another spin! Waahoooo!! Give me another go right now!!"









The only way of slowing is by employing the left and right air-brakes (shoulder buttons), and these are used to powerslide around the track. They work the craft beautifully, and allow pin-point accuracy as your sled screams through tunnels and over bumps. Mention must also be made of the weapons. As you can tell from the screenshots, the light trails left by them are nothing short of astonishing (the sort of effects you'd expect to see on the N64), and the exhaust trails follow the craft seamlessly no matter what the speed. Fire your rockets at an enemy close in front of you and his

whole craft shudders, or else flips over and tumbles above you, accompanied by a bright explosion. Of course, once you've gained access to Phantom class racing, you won't have time to see any of this. You'll just be concentrating on how to stay alive!

After a week of constant play, I can honestly say that for my money, this is more fun than Sega Rally, more intense than Burning Road, and believe it or not, faster than Ridge Racer Revolution (with the Angel car!). At the time of writing, you won't find more of an adrenaline rush in gaming than clambering into a Piranha-class cruiser, weaving through a









#### TRACKS

You want tracks? Well, from our almost-finished version of the game, we managed to access a total of eight of them (six normal and two secret), all coming complete with a

multitude of nasty turns, jumps and straights. The beginner's track takes you through an interlinking pipework (complete with hissing steam and loads of girders), the second



has you speeding through arctic tundra on a highway from Hades (with a huge hair-pin turn that'll have you wrestling your air-brakes ferociously) and the third whisks you off to the forests of Chile for some excellent scenery and a cool jump through a rocky tunnel. The remaining



pack of sleds like a madman, scraping around bends and nuking the leader to take gold at the very last second! The fun doesn't end there, either, as there's a two-player mode to deal with (which is making a welcome return, and will be featured in our review as it was sadly not selectable in this version) and of course, the obligatory secrets (which we can't reveal at the moment).

So this is looking like racing perfection? Almost, but with one small niggling problem... we've beaten it already (despite assurances that this would be tougher than the original). Both myself and The Enquirer are praying for more extras to extend the longevity further (such as mirror mode, the original tracks and more sleds) by the time the finished version lands in our laps. Who knows, Psygnosis might even act on these pleas, but even if they don't, they've got my vote for best racer of 1996. Roll on the review...









courses are of a futuristic nature, and as you'd expect, they get gradually

more and more difficult, while the final two require some deft airbraking and your eyes taped open just to zoom round without exploding! Yes, these are all great tracks, and Psygnosis have even added floating robot cameras that track the race (and playback the race). Awesome stuff!



All those high-grade laser-guided pieces of futuristic military hardware make another appearance in this version. Aside from the sled-killers of the first game (the Mines, Turbo Boost, Missiles, Electro Bolt and Shield), there's a whole load of new guns to get to grips with. And

this time these weapons do more than slow you down; watch your energy or you'll blow sky-high! Run over the weapon grids to pick up a random item, and new explosives include the Thunder Bomb (a 'smart bomb' weapon which nukes up to five sleds at once!), Rockets (now three crimson lights of plasma death), the Quake Disruptor (which ripples the track ahead of you, causing destruction in its wake), and the infamous Auto-Pilot (invaluable for negotiating tight turns at speed). The last addition is perhaps the most useful, as the

Auto-Pilot powers through your opponents, and can even win the race if employed at the correct moment.

#### SLEDS

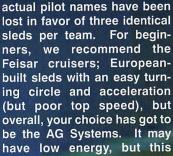
The racing sleds of the future have undergone transformation as well. Apart from taking damage and exploding,











state-of-the-art piece of Japanese hardware has all the controllability you'll ever need. There's also the Auricom (good speed, bad handling) and the Qirex (just don't even go there!) and unconfirmed reports of a prototype Chinese craft...

O:16.a

#### MUSIC

Good news for US gamers craving decent hard-core UK dance music: The new Wipeout will feature all the tracks pre-

sent in the UK version (if you recall, the previous US version had the three best tracks missing!), and that means you've got the cream of British techno pumping away in the background as you race. This time the tunes match the speed of the game itself and suit the title perfectly (the music's so good it's worth buying the CD for!), and the musicians include FSOL (Future Sound of London; famous for Internet gigs and 'Papua New Guinea'), Underworld (famous for rapid lyrics and an awesome live performance), The Chemical Brothers (a techno duo from Manchester famous for DJ and remix) and The Prodigy (famous for shouting). The best video game music ever? Definitely! CH



#### GAN WIPEOUT XL MAKE THE GRADE?? SEE THE ONLY REVIEW OF WIPEOUT XL IN THE NEXT ISSUE!















DEVELOPER - HIGH VOLTAGE

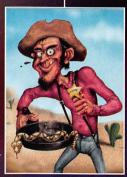
**PUBLISHER - INTERPLAY** 

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

**AVAILABLE - DECEMBER** 



CHIEF HAMBLETON TEMPEST X IS THE RETINA FOR THE MIND'S EXPANSION...

## 11350 20371

TRADITIONAL TEMPEST



**TRIPPY 2000** 



TEMPEST X

nter the mind-expanding world of *Tempest*, the cult classic with more playability and addiction than 90 percent of the hyped next-generation software. For those uninitiated, Tempest places you at the controls of a small yellow spacecraft as it darts and pitches around a vectored landscape, battling through waves upon waves of enemies and increasingly manic levels, powering up with jumping icons, greater laser fire and even drone craft to help you out, and pausing only to explore strange bonus levels before the intense onslaught continues. It won legions of followers at the dawn of the video age, it single-handedly stalled the demise of Atari's Jaguar for several months (despite the dreaded Trevor McFur already surfacing to scare off potential buyers), and now PlayStation and Saturn owners can play a joyous translation of the original, with the added bonus of extra versions!

**TEMPEST 2000** 

True Tempest fans won't even need to read any further: they'll already be swiftly jog-





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17649

ging down to their video games store in ecstatic delight; but for those still unsure, let me start by saying that this represents one of the purest forms of video game addiction ever seen on the planet. The premise is delightfully simple, but the playability, light and sound effects all combine to produce one amazing product that'll have you burning the midnight oil trying to complete.

I'd have been satisfied with a couple of variations on the Tempest theme, but my excitement was heightened to fever pitch when I realized

those nice people at Interplay went the extra mile and provided a whole load of new different

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(arcade perfection, as you'd expect), Tempest Plus (an

enhanced version of the original with a load of extra features, and Tempest 2000, a full-on straight conversion of the Atari game, and Tempest Duel, two-player blastin' fun on the split screen. Then, for all those craving an enhanced version of the game, comes Tempest X, a new and improved Tempest with incredible lighting effects and even cooler explosions (those bonus stages have never looked so good!). Finally, for all those craving the ultimate battle, the appropriately named Trippy 2000 puts in an appearance; a mutated and motionblurred Tempest X that'll have you crying out in retinal agony! Of course, all this is topped off with the stompin' techno anthems, making your progress all the more fraught. A piece of gaming heaven given a new lease on life for the '90s, and an essential part of any self-respecting gamer's collection.



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## PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - ACCOLADE

PUBLISHER - ACCOLADE

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1-4

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - FALL '96



GLITCH Cyborgs demand no salary.





This game has me glued!
Why, I wonder, are we getting such an influx of 32-bit titles which are so incredibly simple and addictive? With Grid Runner, Blast Chamber, and now Pitball, we're being offered games which are incorporating totally refreshing play concepts that aren't dependent on high powered 32-bitness.

Pitball is yet another violent futuristic sport set in outer space (I guess we'll need something to do on our weekends in the future). Mixing elements of basketball with other contact sports, Pitball is a brutal high speed action contest fought 2 on 2 in a pit arena. Many teams are up for play, each of course with their own highs and lows, such as speed, strength, or barbaric power. Naturally, larger characters are slow but strong. and small characters, such as the female teams, are nimble, agile, and speedy. This theory follows through into their special moves, where the big guys have crushing blasts and the faster competitors



have specials which often strike quickly and efficiently. Inactive balls are white (for passing) and "shoot balls" are red and can be powered-up before release. You may also apply an exaggerated

aftertouch to the ball when released – ideal for scoring from tough angles.

Understanding the 'Pit' environment is the key to winning your games. You're in a real-time, texture-mapped polygon constructed arena, with multiple perspectives, light-sourcing, and various hazards. Pitball's action is hot, and every match is introduced by a full Michael Buffer,

"Let's get ready to rummmble!" quote. Too cool! If all this sounds appealing (trust me, it is), stay tuned for a complete review in an upcoming issue. G















### IN THE SPORT OF THE FUTURE

THERE ARE TEAM CORONERS.

# HYPER

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THE BRUTAL VELOCITY OF HOCKEY. THE LETHAL CONSEQUENCES OF MANSLAUGHTER. HYPERBLADE ISN'T JUST A MULTI-PLAYER SPORTS GAME, IT'S A GAME OF SURVIVAL. BECAUSE IF THE SPEED DOESN'T KILL YOU, YOUR OPPONENT WILL.



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In addition to their array of deadly moves, each character has built up their inner energies before the fight, and this can be charged into a massive attack once per round. Although slow, such an attack wounds an enemy beyond compare; and to the accompaniment of some spectacular visuals! The Plasma Strike is activated by pressing Square and Triangle simultaneously, and causes the attacker to spark with unnatural electricity, blink with white energy shards and run their opponent through in a blur. Only available once per round, this attack can be easily avoided, and thus must be attempted when the enemy cannot defend themselves.





#### BASIC TECHNIQUE 2 - PLASMA STRIKE

**▼** Gamo













SEQUENCE 2 HAYATO UNLEASHES THE PLASMA STRIKE AGAINST BILSTEIN

Once you've powered up your cyber-fighter and executed a Plasma attack, your fighter pierces his victim with his preferred weapon while the camera switches and replays the entire skewer from five different angles. Capcom has really gone to town





victim's crumpled

form while darkening the stage set! DEVELOPER - CAPCOM Publisher - Capcom

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE – 4TH QUARTER

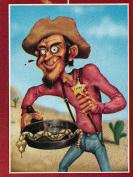
Vector 8











CHIEF HAMBLETON Capcom stomps into the 3D fighting arena!

#### BASIC FIGHT COMMANDS OF THE STAR GLADIATORS

individual's basic commands. The picture above reveals Gore's combo variation of his Poison Scatter. You can only get this attack by successfully completing the specific Plasma Combo. Discover yet more in practice mode.



Each character comes to the crusade with a large array of special fighting techniques. They are a mixture of classic Street Fighter style moves along with button combinations similar to Soul Edge. These commands combined with the Plasma combo give each character at least 30 different attacks. The completion of certain Plasma combos can produce unique versions of an

5	JUNE FIGHTING COMMANDS
METEORIC SHOWER	K, K, K, K
TWINKLE ELBOW	→ + A, A
SUMMERSAULT KICK	<b>↓</b> ↑ + K
MOONSAULT KICK	From behind K, K + G
DOUBLE COMET KICK	↓ ★ + K, K
NORTH STAR COMBO	← ⇒ + B, K
CAMEL CLUTCH	When opponent is on the ground + K
ONE-HANDED SIDE ROLL	₩ + K+G

	GERELT FIGHTING COMMANDS
LIGHTNING SCARLET	A, A, A, A
SOUTHERN ARROW	<b>↓ →</b> + A, K
ANDARCIA STORM	→ <b>→ ↓ ↓ ←</b> + A
BLOODY FLAMENCO	<b>→</b> + K, ← + K
SPANISH DANCE	← + A, A, A
FLYING MATADOR	
KICK DEL SOL	While running K + G
SDF	When apparent is on the ground + K

#### BASIC TECHNIQUE 3 - PLASMA COMBO

Upon entering Training mode, each fighter can practice their combination attacks; essentially a set of linked attacks that can be mixed and matched to suit a player's needs. When in combat, combinations of up to five hits can be created. and with the necessary skill your enemy can be sent reel-





ing by the full force of such a display. The technique of the Plasma Combo takes a little time to master, and it helps to watch your Plasma bar (below your character energy) and continue the next portion of your combo once the initial attacks have appeared in this bar. In addition to these attacks, each character has one ultimate move; the Final Plasma Combination; a five-hit monster combo with an awesome finishing stroke to rent your foe asunder! Splitch!!

SEQUENCE 3 - SATURN HITS HOME WITH

#### THE DEVASTATING PLASMA COMBO



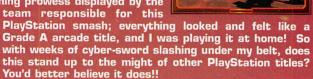






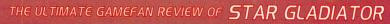
apcom's new foray into the realm of 3D fighting has finally begun; and what a game to stake their abilities with! As you may have gathered by my excited burblings last issue; I was more than a little amazed by the programming prowess displayed by the





Immediately obvious is the time Capcom has spent on











the motion-captured animation of the characters; from the graceful June to the lumbering Gamof. you'll gasp at the movement and wince as each crunching attack hits home. Those already familiar with Soul Edge should have no problem adjusting to this futuristic version of the game, as Star Gladiator has a superficial feeling of similarity, due to the 30fps action and the 3D backgrounds; but playability-wise, Star Gladiator had a whole heap of



0	SATURN FIGHTING COMMANDS
JACK IN THE BOX	B, B, B, B
ROLLER COASTER	A, A, A
FIRECRACKER	← → + K
TOP SPIN	<b>↓</b> ★ → + B
ACROBAT COMBO	♣ 🖈 🖛 + B, B, B
TRAPEZE COMBO	♣ 🖈 🖶 + A, A
TAPPING ATTACK	← → + B
DOUBLE SURPRISE	→ + K, A
100	

CATHOLI

7	VECTOR FIGHTING COMMANDS
CRAZY CHAINSAW	B, B, B, B
KILLING PROCEDURE	A, A, A
HORIZONTAL LASER	<b>↓</b> ★ → + K
UPPER BEAM BAZOOKA	→ + A
LOWER BEAM BAZOOKA	<b>★</b> + A
LEG IMPACT	➡ + K, K
VERTICAL LASER	When facing away from opponent A
LAST SHOOTING	While throwing from behind

#### IS THIS THE FUTURE FOR ALL CAPCOM FIGHTING GAMES?

different tactics to employ.

Before touching on these gameplay elements, I've just got to return to those backgrounds: This is a first for the PlayStation; you've never seen backgrounds as detailed and seemingly real as these; and that's not all, because behind the fight, the scenic features actually move while the battle takes place! You'll actually stop fighting to watch a couple of space cruisers dogfighting (in 3D!), and other stages feature zero-G space debris and even a flock of flamingoes! Credit to Capcom for spending that extra time sculpting the backdrops into believable settings; they could so easily have turned into blocky, mock-3D tragedies (ahem, best not mention Toshinden 2 at this point).

Once you've sat down to slap your cyber-opponent about a bit, you'll soon discover that all the









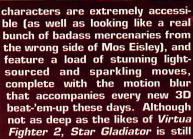












extreme fighting, and should have you glued to your PlayStation for weeks at a time. As you can see, some of the more difficult moves are stunning to view, and despite a limited floating potential, the combo system is novel and works really well, rounding off this awesome debut from the masters of the 2D. This has an excellent learning curve, no overbalanced characters and a couple of secret folks (shown last issue), and all combine to provide the PlayStation owner (and arcade-goer) with a beautiful, highly playable and extremely polished fighter.

YOURS FAITHFULLY, THE CHIEF







MORE INCREDIBLE STAR GLADIATOR COVERAGE NEXT ISSUE
FEATURES INCLUDE PROFILES AND THE HIDDEN FIGHTERS!

EARTHQUAKE

DINOFLAME

LANDSLIDE KICK

DOUBLE VOLCANO KICK

CRAZY WAVE

LOWER DINO FLAME

LEG BITE

LONG BACK DASH

R, K, K, K

White lying an White lying an K

White lying an K

LEG BITE

LONG BACK DASH

100	S Propo	ZELKIN FIGHTING COMMANDS
1	BLUE TYPHOON	K, K, K, K
	CONDOR WHEEL	A, A, A
	FIRE WHEEL COMBO	触 + A, K
100	AIR WHEEL	From behind K, K
	THUNDER WHEEL COMBO	← ⇒ + B, K
į,	1. SUPER JUMP	then 1 1
	SKY DESTRUCTION	During 1. 👢 + K
4	AIR JAVELIN	During 1. 👢 + A

	GORE FIGHTING COMMANDS
COMPLETE PRESCRIPTION	B, B, B, B
COMPOSITION CHANGE	<b>↓  →</b> + B
POISON SCATTER	<b>↓</b> • + A
1. ABSOLUTE REST	₩ + K + G
OSCILLATION TREATMENT	During 1. A + B
LEG ROLL	During 1. 🗢
MAGNIFICATION CHANGE	↓ x 2
INTERNAL ORGAN CHANGE	↓ ★ ← K, K, K



REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - ARTDINK

PUBLISHER - SCFA

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCE

AVAILABLE – NOVEMBER

technologies, and plot the domination of Jupiter's moons. But *Carnage Heart* takes the genre a big step further, allowing you to design the very software that drives your mechs. Of course, you can allow the computer to design it for you,

but that's like playing Street Fighter and having the computer handle your special moves. To truly enjoy Carnage Heart, you'll need to learn and master its own graphic-based programming language, and design your own mechs from both the inside and out. It sounds hard... and it is. But it can be extremely rewarding if you take the time to get into it. And really, it isn't that hard to pick up. The "chips" that make up each program are mostly just simple movements, attacks, and radar scans. But depending on how they're linked, you can end up with either a brilliant killing machine that masterfully dodges enemy fire while seeking out and efficiently destroying his foes, or a glitch-ridden pile of scrap metal that blindly walks into walls and accidentally destroys his own teammates with friendly fire. You can get really fancy, too. designing your robots to work as a well-organized team, or so I assume... when I see those chips, with such baffling descriptions as "If channel is 1, send black signal," I have a sudden uncontrollable impulse to panic, switch off the PlayStation, and watch CHiPS reruns. I guess I'm not quite ready for that one yet.

We don't have the manual or any documentation on Carnage Heart yet, so I'm afraid I can't go into depth on the campaign mode yet. There are a ton of options available, but I can't quite figure out what to do, so you'll have to wait for future articles before we can report on that aspect. Until then, I'll give you a quick rundown of the software mode, something to baffle and confuse you until you get the game and learn the proper way, by trial and error. Even if it's based only on the software design aspect, I can confidently report that strategy fans, computer nerds, Magic: The Gathering addicts and MENSA members definitely have some-

You create your program by setting chips (of which there are 40 different kinds) on a square grid. The arrows determine the path the information will travel, and, and each chip has various fields that can be modified for





your intended purposes.

A mech with no program will just stand there and do nothing. You'll need to program everything from simple routines (to look for enemies, move, and shoot) to more complex

ones (to detect obstacles in your line of fire, to avoid shooting at your own allies, to dodge enemy fire, etc). Once you have the basics down, you can get even more detailed, programming them to





conserve ammo, selfdestruct when low on health (and an enemy's nearby), and to work together as a team. You can increase the maximum size of your programs and the speed at which your mech executes them by develop-

ing and purchasing better CPUs.

When you have a completed design, you can test it in

the arenas, and see where it needs improvements. So you know where the flaws are, the game displays your program as the mech cycles through it, in the upper-left hand corner of the screen.











## TOBAL TRULY IS NUMBER ONE! THE HOT FIGHTING TITLE FROM SQUARE!

ith a number of weeks of gameplay under my belt, I can finally review Square's first foray into the field of 3D beat-'emups, and for the most part, I agree entirely with Nick's enthusiasm expressed last issue (Vol. 4 Iss. 10). This is a more-than-worthy addition to any gamer's fighting library, and an excellent way for Square to start their PlayStation games rolling before the biggie (FFVII) stomps into view. Being a Namco man myself, I was most interested to see exactly how well this measured up against the PlayStation's best beat-'em-up (Tekken 2), and the num-

ber one Saturn fighter (VF2), especially as developers from both these titles worked on Tobal No. 1. Let's limber up for some fisticuffs, shall we?

There's a whole load of differences between this and 'other' fighting games which mark this as being somewhat special. First of all, there's the introduction, a CG delight showing all eight competitors limbering up before engaging in bouts of slapping. This is professionally rendered animation, and up there with the

likes of Tekken 2 as a fine way to introduce the characters before the pugilistic punch-fest. Once the title screen has been negotiated, and you're into the actu-

al bouts, you'll get to grips with the fighting system itself, which is a curious mixture of styles (touching on Tekken, Virtua Fighter and

Toshinden) with a bucketful of original features thrown in for good measure. Most original is the way the different characters move around their foe, as up and down move you into or out of the screen, and







• Height 175cm • Weight 70kg • Age: 17 • Place of Birth: Earth • Sex: Male

PUSH START BUTTON

The youngest son of a wealthy English family, he won his first martial arts championship two years ago at the tender age of 15, and is still an undefeated martial arts genius. With an intellect to match he is formidable but friendly, and views Mary vonskaya as his foremost rival.

His main tactic is to link pinpoint-sharp attacks together into devastating combos. His throws are excellent, but his main strength is in the rapid attacks that are so difficult to block. Orthodox, but powerful.



not towards or away. This initially takes a lot of getting used to (unless you've never played a 3D fighter before), but soon proves to be an innovative step and adds greatly to the depth of your game. Once you've grown accustomed to this and other additional features, you've got a highly realistic and deep fighter. As Nick already stated, the grapple system is another

#### MARY IVONSKAYA

A WILD AND REFINED SUPER PRO-WRESTLER

• Height 189cm • Weight 140kg • Age: 32 • Place of Birth: Earth • Sex: Female

• Place of Birth: Earth • Sex: Female

A mother who emigrated from Earth with her three year-old child and joined the tournament in order to test her strength and win the prize. She defeated the men in Earth's mixed-gender super pro-wrestling league to gain the seat of champion. Her build is unimaginable and exquisite, but this Russo-French woman has a hidden gentle side, and is prone to tears.

She possesses the many intense-filled techniques of a prowrestler, and has some degree of speed, and is an ideal character to begin with. Because she has many strong techniques, you'll need to rush in to attack and grapple when you're fighting a fast character. She definitely can't lose in terms of sheer power, and is one of the game's finest fighters.















marvelous addition to your fisting fun, with each character having a full complement of grapples which can be reversed... and then reversed again by the initial grappler! How cool is that!

The excellence doesn't end there, either, as Square has added little realistic touches to enhance your combat action. A character receiving a hit is a prime example, as they sway backwards when hit, and stagger after a low hit. This is the very finest motion capture, and adds considerably to this fighter's aesthetics, and means there's no need for 'hit explosions'; Square are obviously going for realism in a very big way. To complete the ensemble, *Tobal No. 1*'s music is delightful

and distinct, and almost up there with Namco's finest.

So, this is the perfect fighter then? Well nearly, but not quite... There's a few problems which I personally found detracted from the game. Despite the resolution being astounding and the frame rate running at a constant 60fps, the game controls like a 30fps game; there's really no special moves that take advantage of this increased frame rate. And while I'm on this negative vibe, those graphics

#### CHUJI-WU

THE ALL-PURPOSE KENPO MASTER

• Height 175cm • Weight 70kg • Age: 17 • Place of Birth: Earth • Sex: Male

The Earthling son of a New Chinese father and Japanese mother, he lost both of his parents at a young age, and now lives with his stepfather and sister. His meditation means he's a master at controlling his own body.

A good all-around fighter who has the power to face any opponent on an equal basis, and can fend off attacks from any other opponent with ease. Because he has many techniques with strong destructive force, he can instantly reverse a losing fight, and can react to an opponent's openings, no matter how brief. A wide variety of moves and great flexibility are Chuji's strong points.



**ELDER WARRIOR AND EX-TOBAL CHAMPION** 

• Height 161cm • Weight 50kg • Age: ? • Place of Birth: Earth • Sex: Male

Hom's master, and an ancient Earthling from Taiwan, he became only the second fighter ever to beat Emperor Udan in the 66th Tobal contest. As a prize, he received a large quantity of Molmoran Ore (estimated worth: \$100 million), but still lives a life of humility, for reasons of his own.

A technical character with every type of attack at his disposal. Rather sluggish, but if you can think quick enough to match the right attack to a fighting situation, he'll show you incredible power.







DEVELOPER - DREAM FACT.

PUBLISHER - SQUARE

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1 OR 2

DIFFICULTY - MODERATE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



## THE FIGHTING ACTION IS UNEQUALLED! ONLY ON THE PLAYSTATION!









CHIEF HAMBLETON
CAN THIS TOP TEKKEN 2?
TURN OVER TO FIND OUT!

could be more detailed (yeah, I like my polygons texture-mapped, I'm afraid), and the characters don't really have enough charisma to hold my interest for long. But, hey, other GF staffers really dig that crazy flapping chicken dude! But me? I

prefer my fighters with more character...

Now, perhaps it's because this game is so fast and deep (and comes from Square) that I've searched hard for a few negative points to throw in, but when you look at the overall game itself, this is an astounding achievement, and one piece of software which should be in every self-respecting gamer's collection. This should be bought

# PUSH START BUTTON

#### HOM

INDUSTRIAL ROBOT WITH COMBAT SKILLS

Height 180cm • Weight 150kg • Age: 20 Place of Birth: Tobal • Sex: ?

Although formerly a mining emblance of intelligence, he was deeply mpressed by Fei Pusu's performance in the 66th bal tournament, and became his disciple, study ing his technique religiously. Although most ple view him as incredibly serious and dedic (due to his 17 years of continuous training), a r ory failure meant he unfortunately spent this time forgetting the techniques he just

This character uses surprise as a weap able to pick away at his foes with unp attacks. His movements are very unique, especially for a robot. However, all of his moves leave big openings, and an opponent that could accurately read him would be able to deliver crushing counter attacks. Pay very close attention to your timing when you begin an attack, and you may yet win!







without hesitation and played until your fingers bleed. Another triumph from the Square stable.

Of course, the kings of the RPG couldn't let out their first fighter without including a mini-RPG in the bargain, as the options include choosing the Quest mode. This pits you against all manner of strange horrors in a corridor-based maze, with much to find and little room for sloppy fighting. Think of this mode as another Tobal game and you'll soon realize that not only has Square delivered a highly original beat-'em-up, but they've given you a really cool maze quest as well! There are four







#### EPON

BEAUTIFUL FIGHTER WITH BURNING SPIRIT

• Height 167cm • Weight 50kg • Age: 18 • Place of Birth: Kittaik • Sex: Female

Despite her appearance as a small but perfectly formed Earthling, Epon is a Kittaikian, from one of Tobal's moons. She has a calm, quiet nature, but possesses awesome power when goaded into a battle. Her past is shrouded in secrecy, and her appearance at the tourna-

Her small and nimble form allows fast-hitting attacks. Her hits are not particularly strong, especially compared to some of the lumbering glants, but her speed sufficiently covers for this. Because some of her throws have such bone-crunching power, they can ensure victory if used at the right time.

## THE QUEST MODE ROCKS! BEAT IT AND PLAY AS THE BOSS FIGHTERS!

different mazes to wander





through, and they can serve either as a game in their own right, or experience at perfecting your battle skills in the fighting ring.

You should concentrate on some serious powering up, as the mazes are very tricky indeed, but when completed, they yield the bosses of the game (there's that devilishly tricky final dungeon to explore which reveals another competitor...), with over twenty different types of monster to fight, items to pick up and throw, potions to drink (careful of the poison and max. life down!) and various tricks to learn. Watch your defense and attack skills rise after eating certain items, and prepare yourself for some serious bobbing and weaving when the next assailant hoves into view! By the time you've eventually completed all the different dungeons, your character should emerge highly skilled in the ways













#### ILL-GOGA

FIGHTING FOR A WOMAN WITH BRUTAL POWER

• Height 201cm • Weight 180kg • Age: ? • Place of Birth: Wakoibayai • Sex: Male This giant resides on Wakoibayai; Tobal's smallest moon. His dream is to present his Wakoibayaian girl-friend with the ceremonial nose-ring that would win him her hand in marriage. To afford such a treasure, he has entered the tournament hoping to win the extravagant prize on offer. His personality matches his appearance, but surprisingly, his favorite hobby is reading.

Ill Goga's fighting style is characterized by his over whelming power and awesome bulk. His movements are quite slow, but by just landing an attack on his opponent, Ill Goga has the power to determine the battle's pace. The most visible show of his power is in his throws, which are more than a match for any character, and should be employed at the earliest opportunity.



of the warrior. What better way to improve your fighting potential than by questing?

We'll be back next month with another bout of Tobal (bosses this time), so until then... put up your dukes! CH

#### **OLIEMS**

A KIND AND KNOWLEDGEABLE FIGHTING GIANT

Height 198cm • Weight 110kg • Age: 19 Place of Birth: Kientakk • Sex: Male

Oliems was born on Tobal, but is actually an allen known as a Kientakkian. They look hostile, but are nat-urally gentle and peace-loving. Because Kientakkians will gladly and wisely advise anyone, whatever their troubles may be, they're regarded by Earthlings with great respect. Oliems is the father of two children and one egg. He favors freshly picked earthworms.

Oliems is a strong fighter and well equipped to handle both powerful and fast attackers. Because of his full assortment of punch attacks, he can fight effectively even when he's left with no openings. However, his punches have a very short range and they're not easy to score with, so a competent fighter should use control, and back them up with his variety of throws.



## FORMULA

he shining star of PlayStation quality software, Liverpoolbased Psygnosis, has delivered yet another stunning title for those desiring professionally crafted PlayStation releases. As the video game world knows, these people know how to

make driving games, so it was with great relish that I followed the progress of Bizarre Creations' baby as they attempted to devise the definitive Formula One racing game. After a year of waiting, the time has finally come; I could re-enact any of the races from the 1995 F1 season on any one of 17 (yes, you read that correctly) different courses from around the globe!

Let me stress from the very beginning that F1 is a game for everyone, whether they're after the arcade thrills of ramming million-dollar race cars off a track at 120 mph without landing in a crumpled heap, or refining their pride and joy and competing in a 70 lap race where one slight error

will send you spinning. You want options? You'll be wading through the F1 preferences for weeks! There's an alternative selection for almost every conceivable situation: Control your car with a plastic steering wheel? No problem! Change the down-force of your rear wings? You got it! The fun doesn't end there, either; go for a single race (choose any track) or the whole 1995 championship (providing you've got a

month to spare), and then change the weather, car damage, collisions, duel or full 26 car line-up. After this, there's the small matter of driver selection from the 35 official drivers (Mansell, Shumacher, Coulthard)...



#### ARCADE MODE

LESS REALISTIC BUT MORE FUN! **EMPHASIS ON SPEED AND EXCITEMENT!** 

**COMPETE AGAINST YOUR OPPONENTS** WHILE THE CLOCK TICKS DOWN!

YOU CAN'T BE DAMAGED SO SMACK OTHER CARS FROM THE TARMAC, BUDDY!









#### GRAND PRIX MODE

COMPETE IN ALL 17 CHAMPIONSHIP COURSES AROUND THE WORLD!

RACE 70+ LAPS JUST LIKE THE REAL THING!

SUPERB HANDLING AND CAR DYNAMICS **ADD TO THE REALISM!** 

CAR VULNERABILITY MAKES SAFE **DRIVING ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESS!** 



Once the quest to complete the option screens has been negotiated and you've changed almost every con-

ceivable feature (yes, there's even a Dolby Pro Logic feature in here!), the race itself can begin. This is where you strap yourself in and prepare for the ultimate in Formula One

thrills! Immediately you can tell the amount of care and attention (not to mention time) that Bizarre Creations have spent texture-mapping the track to perfection: each course weighs at between 60 000 and 90 000 polygons, and despite some slight pop-up, this is among the most pleasing visual feasts I've witnessed on a next-generation machine. Other racing games can hide pop-up by twisting the corners and placing obstructing hills in the way (Impact Racing tries this and still manages disastrous pop-up), but because these are exact replicas of existing tracks, the PlayStation game libraries have been taken to their limit in pursuit of pop-up perfection...















THIS LAP

SHIFT 6

HIFT 4

152<sup>Mph</sup>

TAG HEUER Official Timing

<mark>Besv Vulie</mark> Fulfil

48.549

#### **OPTIONS-TASTIC!**

**CUSTOMIZE YOUR CAR IN EVERY WAY!** 

ADJUST STEERING, BRAKING AND DOWN-FORCE ON FRONT AND REAR WINGS!

SELECT A TEAM AND DRIVER FROM THE 1995 FORMULA ONE SEASON!

SELECT A GAME MODE FROM GRAND PRIX, **ARCADE AND TWO-PLAYER DUEL!** 

**SELECT A CIRCUIT FROM 17 COU** 

Your car handles exactly like vou'd expect a multi-million dollar racer's dream to; there's no powersliding here, just supreme judgment and careful use of the game's multiple camera angles (ranging from up-close tarmac effects to a blimp's-eye view). Once you're familiar with the ingame car manipulation, you'd better start employing some winning race strategies; those CPU cars are the most intelligent ever seen! Some will actively weave in front of you as you try and pass them while others slipstream you in a most devious manner! This is absolutely the greatest challenge ever seen in PlayStation racing: I personally took apart Wipeout XL in two days, but I won't be finished with F1 any time in the foreseeable future!

There's the music to consider here as well. Those tired of techno will be happy to listen to the guitar plucking of Steve Vai and Joe Satriani as they race around Silverstone, Monte Carlo or Hockenheim. This is definitely a rocker's par-

adise, and an interesting change from the usual dance











partial to a spot of Prodigy myself). However, you can always forego the riffs in favor of commentary by world renowned F1 expert Murray Walker (Er, yes, a bald bloke who's only famous in the UK). Fortunately, his brand of wit doesn't get that grating or repetitive and adds # OF PLAYERS - 1-2 to the tension somewhat (and you can always switch him off!). Finally, you can always hook a couple of PlayStations together and go at it with the link-up two-

player mode; another joy from the guys at Psygnosis that really shows their commitment to all facets of the game.

Everything about this title oozes professionalism and hard work; and thankfully the result

is a highly playable racing title with a huge longevity, impressive graphics and great sound. It'll appeal more to the F1 enthusiast and simulation racing fan rather than those craving arcade action, but you certainly can't fault F1 for omitting any factors! This is utterly absorbing racing that'll keep you hooked for months at a time... CH





BLISHER - PSYGNOSIS

FORMAT - CD

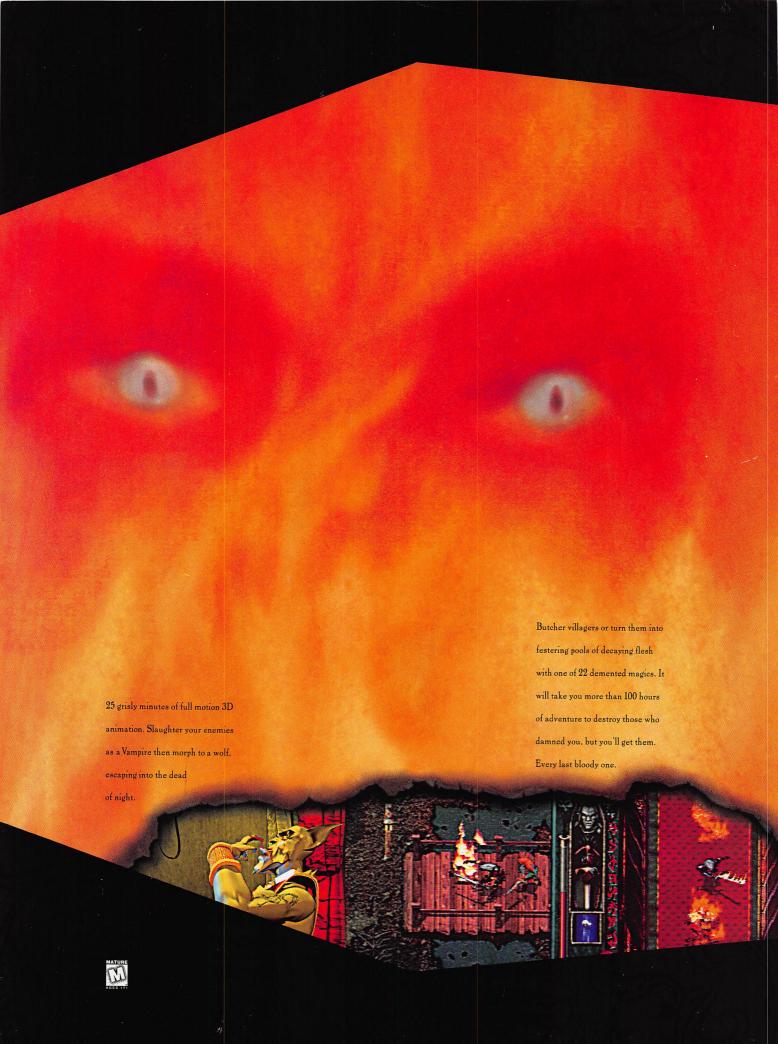
IFFICULTY – DIFFICULT

VAILABLE – OCTOBER



CHIEF HAMBLETON THE KINGS OF THE RACING GENRE, WHO BROUGHT YOU *WIPEOUT* AND **DESTRUCTION DERBY NOW ARRIVE WITH THEIR NEW** BABY... BUT IS IT THE **CORRECT FORMULA FOR** SUCCESS? YOU BETCHA!!







Forever. It is a black and dreadful place. Where the undead feast on the living

## ETERNAL PANNATION REVENUE TO THE REPORT OF THE PANNATION OF THE PANNATION

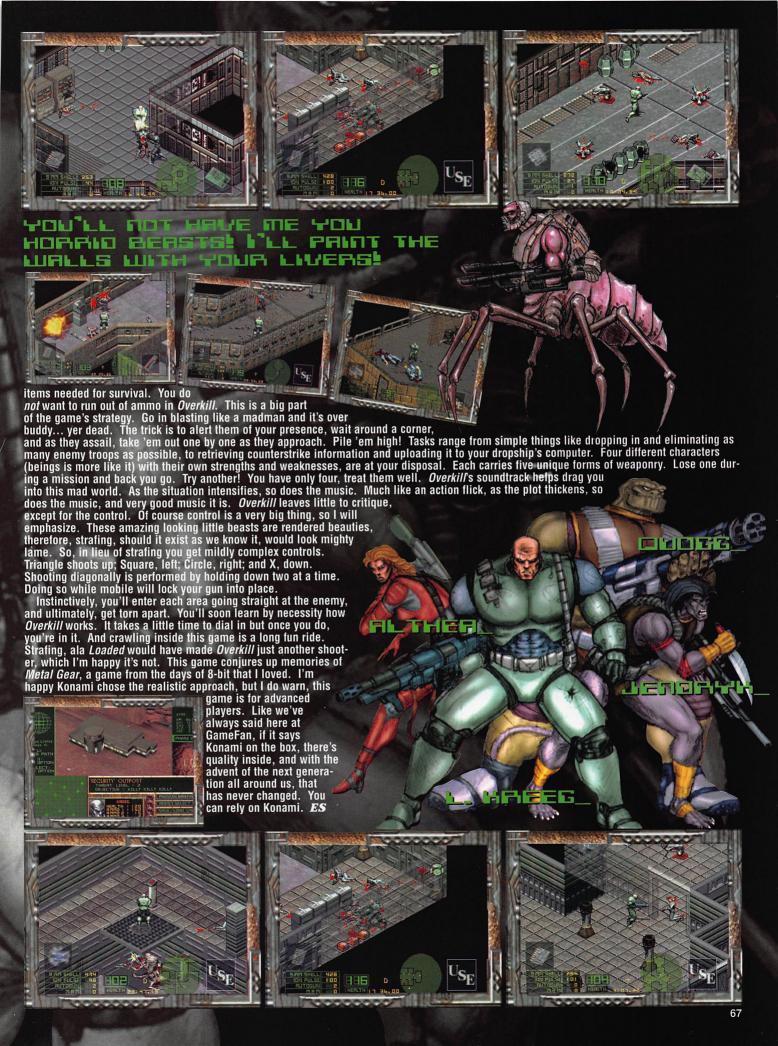
Crystal Dynamic's Blood
Omen: Legacy of Kain.
Whether you choose the
body of man, the form of
wolf or the cloak of mist, the
search for and annihilation
of those who damned you is
your only purpose.

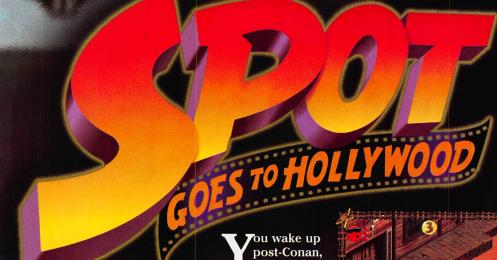
















**DEVELOPER - VIRGIN** 

PUBLISHER - VIRGIN

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS -

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - SEPTEMBER



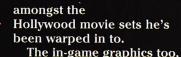
E. STORM
SPOT WOULDN'T
SURVIVE IN THE
HOLLYWOOD I KNOW.

stairs into the kitchen, and getting yourself a bowl (or trough) of cereal (preferably Captain Crunch), sit down at the table. As you go to pour the milk, you notice the sad little picture of 32-bit

Spot on the side of the milk carton. Well, that milk must be expired, because here he is!

Though it took quite a bit of time, Spot has finally made his entrance into the world of the 32-bit console gaming... Hi Spot, nice to see you.

As the game loads up, and the opening cinema rolls, you'll begin to understand why Spot took so long. This game has one of the highest quality FMV intros ever produced for a video game. It amazed us all. It is, for the most part, that which you would see in a theater, sitting in the dark, probably behind the world's only 8ft. popcorn-chompin' mama. Here is much better. The intro sets the stage for poor Spot who, dropped off in his limo, must fend for himself



are quite spectacular. Each enemy is a hand drawn, traditionally animated sprite. They're toons. They stand out well against the pre-rendered backdrops, which are stiff and lifeless for the most part with no warping and little parallax.

They're pretty though, that's the trade-off.

The gameplay in SPOT is isometric platforming in its most basic form. You run, jump and shoot carbonation at enemies. That's all you do. That's all Spot ever does. But, this time, you do so only when Spot's walking. The designers have broken up the action nicely. Spot now flies in his very own shooter, and (you gotta' love this) rides a Big-Wheel! Remember those? If he

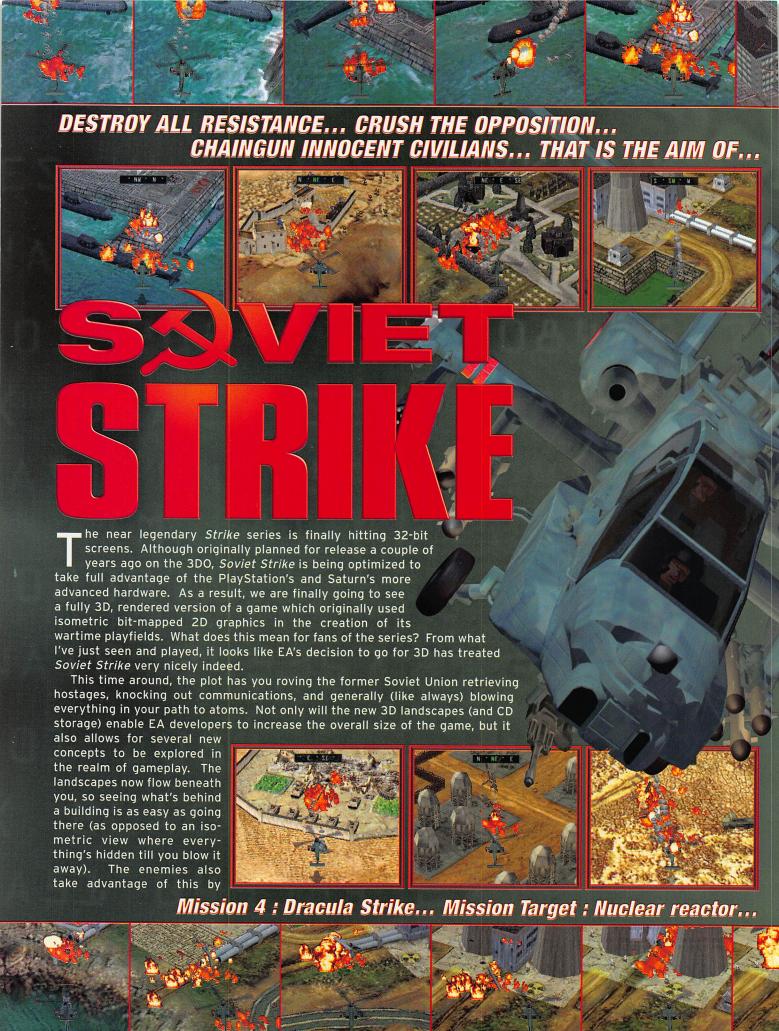
was smart he'd take off the seat and ride scooter style. I guess he doesn't have time with a T-Rex on his butt (does Spot have a butt?). The token mining cart ride is in here as well. Of course there's bosses to deal with too, and they're pretty nasty. Some are hand drawn, some are rendered, but they're all distinctly 32-bit in























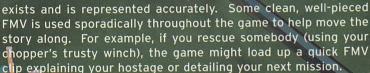




moving in reaction to your tactics to intercept and attack, according to the much expanded playfield. This active battlefield scenario is generated by a thoroughly researched Al system - meaning that enemies are no longer the sitting ducks they were in previous *Strike* games. Across five huge missions, be prepared to encounter various Russian rebel armies in any number of shrapnel-throwin' situations, requiring a re-thought strategy at every turn.

Although our preview copy can best be described as "work-in-

progress," we were still given a good impression of EA's custom 3D engine (by the 3D crew who worked on Road Rash 3DO). There may be only one perspective, a semi-overhead view, but it allows one to see a good distance and is very easy to work with. My opinion is this: If there were a choice of perspectives, you'd probably be playing with this view anyway. The texture-mapped polygonal movement is above average at this point in the preview, and should improve nicely as it nears completion coming Interestingly, the vast majority of the game's textured polys were compiled based on real life topographical maps and satellite photos, so the geography you're flying over actually



Being a big fan of the Strike series, I am pleased to see the development of Soviet Strike moving along nicely. I'm seeing character, plenty of missions, a good lookin' 3D engine, and the usual assortment of massive destruction (Boom! Boom! Yo' dead, sucka!). I'm happy to see that this series will continue to be known for its quality. We'll be back soon with a complete review.











DEVELOPER - EA

**PUBLISHER - EA** 

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBEF



GLITCH
WITH GAMES LIKE
THIS, I NO LONGER
HAVE TO FAX MYSELF!









First Mission Objective : Locate the missing operatives...













# DISR UPDATE



DEVELOPER - UNIVERSAL INT.
PUBLISHER - UNIVERSAL INT.

FORMAT - CD

# OF DIAVEDO

# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - MODERATE

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER

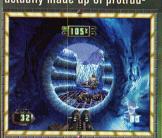


CHIEF HAMBLETON ONE HECK OF A PROJECT, BY CRACKY!

ou just can't get enough of corridor exploration games (with a huge dollop of entrails, naturally) these days, and Disruptor from Universal hopes to take the genre one stage further by employing a number of additions to tempt PlayStation gamers away from their Doom diet. Apart from blowing large chunks out of your enemy with the usual array of killing ordinance, your character (a Lightstormer unit from the bad sector of town) has also received a large number of biomechanical parts, and is blessed with not-so-latent psychic powers (Yuri Geller meets RoboCop with a BIG gun).

Evil Lights already extolled this game's virtues back in Volume 4, Issue 8, but the most recent version of the game improves on the already promising gameplay with a whole host of new environments to battle through; from the dead silence of a remote space station (that is, until robotic pirates infil-

trate and home in on your location) to the icy cold of a nearby snow planet. These new levels feature much more in the way of detailed scenery; ice structures are actually made up of protrud-



ing polygons, and the ground proves to be an ice-rink once you're on the run from the various mechanoids, soldiers and more gibbering entities that inhabit the expansive levels. The other main improvement over games that have gone before is a mix-and-match approach to foe disposal. Take down your enemy with a juicy rotary cannon, and then finish the job with a psionic blast (all this killing takes place in a fully light-sourced environment, naturally). Yeah, this sounds like a Hambleton game to me!

Insomniac developers are working through the night (ahem) to ensure this game meets the tough criteria set by Doom and PowerSlave, and providing they can match the ease of control afforded by these two titles; Disruptor looks capable of stomping lesser games with a huge bio-mechanical boot. We'll be back to fry some alien brains real soon... CH











# STRIKE HARD STRIKE FAST





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**Navigate** through 10 different landscapes, destroy everything in your path, and race to save the world from ecological Armageddon. Play Strike Point - the ultimate **3D** fighter simulation game available for PlayStation.



2010 N. First Street San Jose, CA 95131













DEVELOPER - UEP

PUBLISHER - SONY

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

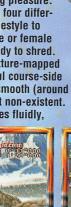
AVAILABLE – NOVEMBER





esides the Jaguar game Val d'Isere, would the next generation get by without a snowboarding game? No way. UEP and EA both have one. UEP's Cool Boarders arrives first. A no-brainer, really, since we're looking at the review. I'm impressed that a small Japanese company would take the initiative and produce such a noteworthy game based on a sport from the faraway USA. Shreddin' the slopes and catching major air sure feels good on my PlayStation. Three unique courses - novice, advanced, and expert, each steadily more treacherous, are what stand between you and victory, and by the time you're through with this one, you'll be snowblind and bruised my friend. Baby's got gameplay! Before hittin' the hill, you'll be escorted through the options to grab which ever fashion statement you might wanna make. Six awesome 'boards, each uniquely airbrushed, are also up for your snow carving pleasure. Your board can be chosen in four different colors, and vary from freestyle to downhill. Choose to be male or female (how timely), and you're ready to shred.

All three hills offer hot texture-mapped polygonal terrain and colorful course-side scenery. The frame rate is smooth (around 24 fps), and clipping, almost non-existent. Your crazed 'boarder animates fluidly,



92km/n

drifting and carving realistically. Sharp front or backside carving is performed by the X button. You'll need to master exactly when you need to slow down and dig into sharp turns to keep from bailing. Slower turns mean precious time but chunking off a cliff is much worse, especially if the voice is on. Errr, those taunts, shut-up! Mr. Cliche loves to chime in and see if you can

understand what he's saying. Turn him off! I think the programmers in Japan grabbed the first American guy that walked by their office and handed

him Mr. Microphone. Whoa dude, like totally, fifty bucks? Sure. As much as CoolBoarders relies on speed so it does on aerials as well. Prior to a prime precipice, mash and hold the button and then launch! From there your commands wield an assortment of hot aerials. Of course, go for too much and biff! Watch out where the huskies go! The longer you hold, the higher you fly. The steepness of the hill, your speed, and your take-off point all figure into the equation. Could this mean actual depth? Why, yes. You won't be zippin' through CoolBoarders in a day. No way. To obtain three cups in each course is to control the snowman, but only true masters will achieve this lofty goal. Next





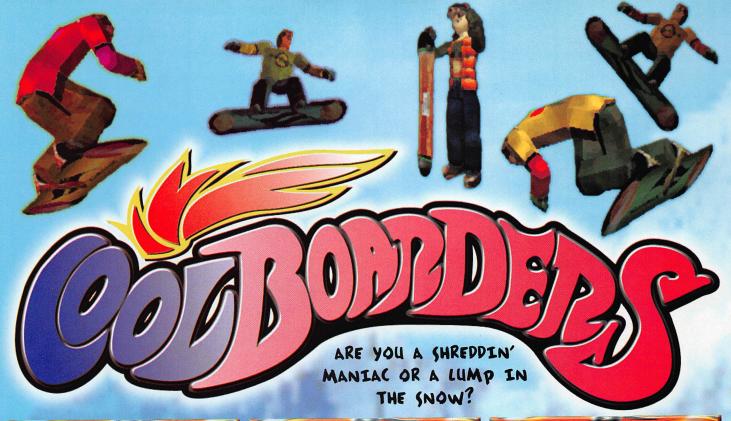




















month we'll detail how to control ol' frosty.

Trophies are awarded in three different categories: Overall Time, Best Trick, and Top Points (a combination of radness and time). You may shoot for any goal, on any course, whenever you feel like it, but you will be rewarded a hot new board if you collect all three on the same course. Earning the upper-class boards is the key to beating the tougher hills. Yet more fun for you lies in the ghost option. Choose a ghost and your last run is mimicked as you take the next. You know you're gonna beat your best time if you're in front of your prior self. That worked. To top it all off somehow these intense Japanese developers managed to fill the game with *Tim Dale*-like surf tunes, straight out of *Beach Blanket Bingo*. Like double cool, bra-ski... we're fer sure there, dude. The PS is like, hot.





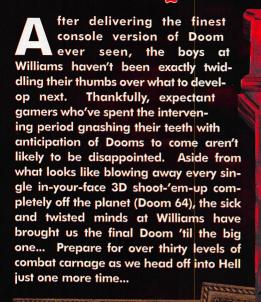


DUDE! THERE'S LIKE, A BABE IN THAT TUB. WHOA, BLUE HAIR. TRIPPY.

HOLD THE JUMP
BUTTON TO
CHARGE AND THEN
GO FOR MAXIMUM AIR! GET
MUI TRICK
POINTS AND
LIKE, WOW DUDE
VER HOT!



## THEOMING MESSAGE: JUPITER MINING COMPANY VII REQUEST IMMEDIATE BACK-UP! MAY-DAY! MAY-DAY!



After the familiar Williams
logo has faded, and the Final
Doom screen has thudded into view,
you're greeted with the infamous 'skinboard' backdrop and the now-familiar

options screen. One extra feature has been added; you can now whip your right hand into a frenzied blur using a mouse to control your marine's movement, but otherwise, it appears little different from the original version. And then come the level selections...

Four difficulty settings are available, and three separate missions are offered to tax and test your trigger finger to the maximum. First up are the Master Levels: thirteen hard-core adrenaline-soaked stages; then TNT: eleven blistering levels of gunning down the undead; and last Plutonium; six final missions

to test even the hardest of colonial marines, (with a big surprise at the end!). So, just before your crack combat operative decides to load his shotgun shells, gun down waves upon waves of hell-spawn and hunt for that Big, er, Freakin' Gun, just what new features are there in here?

Well, unfortunately, only the level designs have changed; everything else has been seen before in the original incarnation, so those expecting a whole new look are likely to be disappointed. There are no new textures (except in the final few levels), there's the odd glitch (courtesy of











PlayStation hardware problems) when monsters move over differently lit areas, the monsters behave in exactly the same manner, and there's still no Arch Vile! Why have you left out the finest Doom monster again?

However, since the guys at Williams has always stated that Final Doom would just be more of the same, we weren't expecting such additions. What you're left with is a superbly atmospheric



### UAC BATTLE MANUAL EXTRACT FROM HAMBLETON'S PERSONAL DATA FILE

CREATE CHAOS AMONG DEMONS BY MANEUVERING THEM INTO A CROSSFIRE. SIT BACK AND WATCH THE DEVILS TOAST THEMSELVES!







SOMETHING EVIL IS APPROJUTING...



THE TOOK IN A SAME AND THE ARM HEALTH



FORMAT - CI

# OF PLAYERS - 1-2 (LINK)

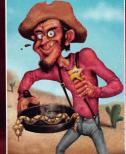
DIFFICULTY - MODERATE

IVAILABLE - NOVEMBER

romp through some of the most fiendish levels you've ever seen. The Master Levels are actual-

ly the hardest of the three, requiring thought and switch-pressing as well as a tooled-up marine and buckets of blood, while the other levels bring forth





CHIEF HAMBLETON More gore than ever before! Chainsaw them varments to pieces!

#### UAC MONSTER MANUAL

EXTRACT FROM HAMBLETON'S PERSONAL DATA FILE
DOOM IS PACKED FULL OF THE MEANEST MOTHERS
EVER TO WALK THE EARTH. GUNNER HAMBLETON IS
PROUD TO REVEAL SATAN'S SERVANTS TO YOU...









FORMER SOLDIER

FORMER SERGEANT

IMP

CHAIN GUNNER

DEMON



carnage than you've ever had before! And yes, there

Master Levels feature some all-new, er, soundscapes, lovingly crafted together by less sane members of the Williams development crew, and this time featuring all-new creaks, groans and even horses whinnying! This is by far the most atmospheric music ever heard in a video game, and a far cry from the soft-rock tragedies that plagued the 3DO version.

Of course, this wouldn't be Doom without DeathMatch; the joyous cre-









LOST SOUL

BARON OF HELL

KNIGHT OF HELL

CACODEMON

PAIN ELEMENTAL



USE THE SUPER SHOTGUN ON THE LARD-HEADED DEMONS.
ONE SHOT CLOSE RANGE IS MORE THAN ENOUGH TO TAKE
THESE VARMINTS DOWN. SPECTRES, HOWEVER...

levels of Doom, complete with cool lighting effects, awesome sound, but no new monsters (at least, not in the normal levels...), then you'll have almost as much of

a blast as you did when you played Doom the first time on the PlayStation. Sure, there's not as many levels, but the multiplayer mode and fiendish level design more than makes up for that. This is the perfect stop-gap until Williams lace up their combat boots and stomp all over the genre with Doom 64... CH



ation that enables two individuals to gun each other down like pigs in the comfort of their own home. Or perhaps you'd rather complete the entire game with a friend, courtesy of Co-operative mode? Either way, it'll be too hard to resist grabbing a Rocket Launcher and gunning down

your mate in the back, and then insisting he walked into your line-of-sight! These features extend the longevity of the title immeasurably, and there's even special DeathMatch-only levels to fight inside; complete with hidey-holes and blind-spots and replete with guns, guns and more guns. This is arguably the finest two-player game on the PlayStation, and reason enough to buy two copies!

As long as you remember that this is essentially thirty-plus













ARACHNOTRON

REVENANT

MANCUBUS

CYBERDEMON

SPIDERDEMON



DEVELOPER - BLACK OPS

**PUBLISHER - VIRGIN** 

FORMAT - CO

# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE



ICEMAN STORM

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED...



EXCITING 2 PLAYER VS MODE!!









s the PlayStation becoming the home for pilots or what? Here comes another mission, checkin' in for the end of '97. So far, the reigning champ, Warhawk, is in no immediate danger, but Virgin's Black Dawn will surely appease fans of that inspired work. Black Dawn, like so many other mission-based helicopter

titles, offers the player a simulation-based shooter incorporating both ground and air

targets, complex controls, realistic voice-overs during each mission, an in-depth story line, and in this case, a finely produced soundtrack. It's a Virgin game, and we've got Skeleton Warriors overtones. Sounds like the work

of Tommy T! Anyway, these games live and die by the features I've just mentioned. Complex controls, for instance, can be either a curse or a blessing. In this case the latter is true. The same applies for each point in fact. In Black Dawn's case, unlike a couple of other similar games I won't mention, everything is finely produced. This is the work of a team who took a great deal of care in formulating every aspect of their game. You can set the controls however you like and then, taking control, you're offered four camera views and a chopper that may as well be real. Hot lighting follows its every move as you take to the skies; there's a button for literally everything. One thing I've noticed in every chopper game I've played is that each developer has their own way of masking pop-up.

Of course some just let you watch it snap into place. In *Black Dawn*, Black Ops has chosen the growing-in-popularity fog mask, a white haze that clears as you progress. They've added transparent mist which flows from it as well, making it an attractive alternative to painful clipping. The polygons in Black Dawn however, including all types of military craft, trees (they're solid, don't underestimate 'em), shelters etc. are the stars of this show.

They are finely textured and animated beyond the point of realism. They

almost look dramatic as they descend, flaming, to the ground below. The explosions by the way are fiery balls of realistic flames, and the burning heaps of metal you've blown out of the sky produce lighting effects flickering realistically against the charred soil as they burn down, frying the enemies

inside. You're one cold-hearted dude. You have to be to survive.

Black Dawn throws a lot at you and demands you learn its controls before even thinking victory. But with all the complaints we had about simplistic controls and shortness in reference to these games on 16-bit, this should be a welcome feature. If you're in the market for some hot chopper action, why watch it on CNN? Head down to your local game store and fry a few your bad self. Virgin's Black Dawn is available now.

ES

















COMING SOON PlayStation Saturn

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**EIDOS** 











government computer, which was created to simulate time travel for combat training, has been infected with a virus bent on destroying it. Your mission is to enter it and eliminate any traces of the virus in a variety of time periods. The premise sounds cool, but unfortunately, this ride through time isn't a smooth one.

From screenshots alone, a comparison could be



and Resident Evil, which is a bit of irony. Commando's creator also made Alone in the Dark, which can be argued is the inspiration for Capcom's masterpiece. However, the background in Commando is FMV: As you progress through a stage, the world moves along with you. This is rather an interesting feature, as it prevents angle adjustments from room to room. Yet, this is Commando's minor flaw. The background tends to scroll

slowly, wasting precious

time as you



wait for it to progress. Also, you can't go back once you've moved ahead, so if you walk ahead too far and miss an item, it's gone.

Its major flaw is, unfortunately, the game engine. Control is slow, from movement to jump response time. It's something that you can get used to, but the problem really comes into play when encountering enemies. If you're unlucky enough to get caught between two



pummel you like mad, and it's insanely difficult to get out of it. This is a problem overcome by careful planning in early stages, but DEVELOPER - ADELINE once weapons progress into firearms, it can get ugly. Reloading takes far too long, and if you're hit PUBLISHER - ACTIVISION in the middle of it, you have to start all over again. The thing is, Time Commando could have been FORMAT - CD enjoyable if the engine wasn't so frustrating. The quest is long, with nine different time periods to

traipse around, and each has its own style of weapon-



obtain and utilize, which is a very cool plus.

My guess is, gamers who prefer PC-style games may like Time Commando more than console gamers, as it feels more like a traditional computer game. If Resident Evil wasn't out there, this would be more of an event on the PlayStation. But, it is, making Time Commando harder to fall in love with, knowing what it could have been with a few minor adjustments.





FOF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

VAILABLE - SEPTEMBER



SHIDOSHI "HEY, WASN'T THAT JUST TIMEGAL?















**DEVELOPER - VIACOM** 

LISHER - VIACOM



E. STORM **NOT JUST ANOTHER BUG HUNT...** 

eople often wonder if mankind will eventually be the ruin of the Earth, (Of course they will! Polluting and exhausting its resources has become a spectator sport. Run down those trees Jed. Hey, I just caught me a lizard... er-her, er-her) - ahem (sorry) - forcing us to journey among the stars to

find new planets on which to continue the human race... and Saturday Night Slam! Yeah right, that could happen. Space travel's right

around the corner! Unfortunately, as The Divide begins, such is the situation, and you are but one of many given the task of locating such places. One day, while flying along on your mission, you and your partner discover a quiet, icy planet slowly coming into view. After running a series of tests and checks, it seems to be inhabitable, so you set out to see for yourself if the iceberg can sustain human life. Your partner warns you of the dangers of setting foot

on an alien planet, but despite her reservations, you manage to talk her into accompanying you to the surface. The landing craft sets down at the bottom of a huge rift, the only really distinguishable feature on

the surface of the planet. To protect against unknown elements. you both suit up in robotic exploration units, and exit the craft to explore the surroundings. However, unbeknownst

to you, something very wrong is going on upon this planet, something started by the hand of another, an outside influence greatly changing the balance of harmony that once existed. From seemingly out of nowhere, a large group of insect-like beasts attack you, quickly overpowering your partner and disabling your life support systems. These creatures, which normally would be nothing more than low-intelligence life forms, (see Saturday Night Slam) have some-

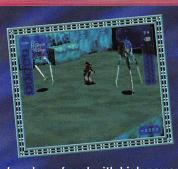


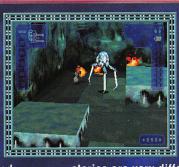
















how been fused with high-powered weaponry, and the confusion of what has just taken place rings through your head as you fall into a state of cryo-sleep.

The game begins as your exploration "suit" thaws out from its frozen state, and you awaken, not knowing at first how long you've been slumbering. You decide the only thing you can really do is try to figure stories are very different, deep in the back of my mind I couldn't help comparing Divide to Metroid; they both hold a similar feeling and atmosphere and require the player to return to places he's already been (of course, that doesn't mean that Divide doesn't have the legs to stand on it's own; they just share a similar style).

The Divide indeed, has the potential to

to become accustomed to the platforming challenges ahead. It's rather easy to pick up but, like Metroid, hard to master.

One can always find a few things that could use a bit of tweaking, and there are a couple of minor points I feel needed more attention. The auto-map for instance, isn't as useful as I'd like and changing areas switches your camera







out where you are, what's going on, and if your partner is still alive, out there... somewhere. And so off you go, to explore the vast expanse of the 3D world which beckons to your call. Then you realize you're in your living room and these are just polygons... Dinner...

From the opening cinema, Divide has a very epic feel to it, helping to raise it above the level of the just another 'explore a 3D world' title. And while the

become a sleeper hit. After being sucked in by all the mega-licenses, you could, or rather should, end up here, pleasantly surprised by the depth of it all.

The graphics fit right in with the outer space atmosphere and honestly look a whole lot better in motion. The game engine holds a lot of promise, and the control feels very solid (quite literally, you are in a metal suit). The beginning of the game provides you with ample opportunity

back to the preset, requiring you to toggle it for each. No big deal really, a minor boggle. Thankfully, a picture is worth a thousand words which, as you can see, I don't have enough room for. What you see is what you get.

Vast, platform covered adventures are always welcome in my book, especially ones as uncommon and diverse as this. This is how series are born... and one may have just been spanked.

























DEVELOPER - RADICAL

**PUBLISHER - VIACOM** 

FORMAT - CD

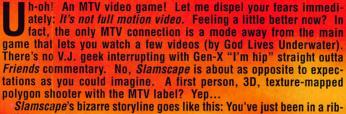
# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - SEPTEMBER



GLITCH LET'S CYBER-MOSH 'TIL WE PUKE GINSENG BURGERS!



Slamscape's bizarre storyline goes like this: You've just been in a ribsplitting, skull-crushing, spleen-busting car accident that left you halfcomatose. As your bloody gore-pile of a body is screeching through the hospital doors, a group of mad hackers just, kinda, steal you, and you're volunteered to become a cyber guinea pig. That's right! You're a mess, but through the miracle of airbags, you're the perfect candidate for an experimental thought-powered virtual simulator, code-named

Slamscape. It seems that previous bug testers, all 16 of 'em, were sucked in by the Slamscape engine and got 'whipped on high for 3 minutes, or until fluffy' leaving their psyches melded together. Uh-huh, you guessed it, you've been slapped with today's lucky badge and they're sending you in, to find the cranial Jell-Opops and hopefully bring them back from the mindscape cybertrap.

Radical has Slamscape running at 60 frames per second, although you really can't see very far into



the horizon before convenient-mist takes over. I suppose everyone's gonna see the SlamScape ads soon - touting their "full, real-time interactive soundtrack." besides being a catchy buzz-word name, this technology is actually pretty cool. Alternative band God Lives Underwater did the music. with PCM tunes that change on the fly, (depending on the on-screen intensity) and it always manages to stay in rhythm. The game itself is fairly short, with very little diversity between the missions (you collect stuff here, destroy

stuff there), and un-clear objectives. It's never bad; just so weird. The enemies, your goals, the crazy music, the bizarre levels – everything is strange to the point of leaving one baffled and confused. Eventually I got a grip on the concept, but I can't say I liked the overall execution. I understand MTV/Viacom probably wanted 3D graphics, something virtual

set in cyberspace, and new and unexplored concepts with revolutionary music technology. The trouble is, Slamscape scrapes the surface of each one of these, but never does any one aspect well enough to carry the game.



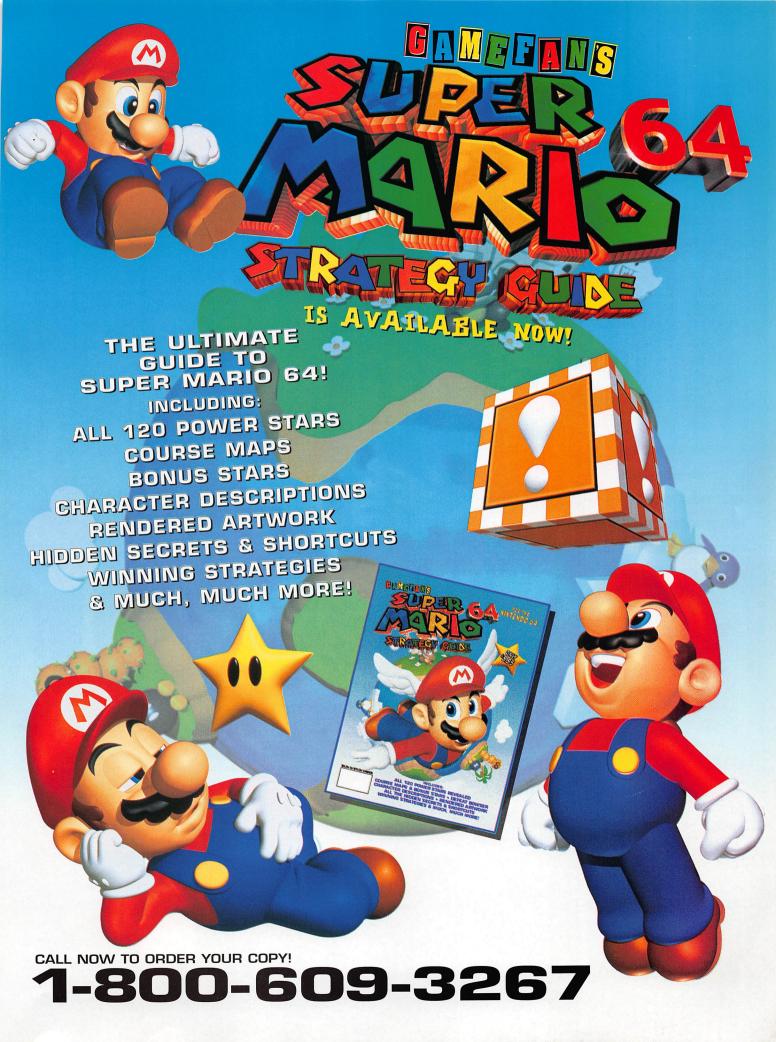






















(hailing from Dublin) are responsible for this hyperracing title, due for both Saturn and PlayStation, and both feature speedy action in the same vein as Wipeout and Hi-Octane. This is extreme racing madness as your souped-up cyber motor attempts to blow as many enemies as pos-sible into the stratosphere. At the same time, you must claw your



way up the racing ladder, collecting power-ups and equipping your vehicle with an increasing array of deadly killing ordinance. Sounds cool, doesn't it? But is it

any good? First impressions are good, as a fluid and professional CG sequence pans around a revving roadster (with particularly excellent lighting effects as the sun streams in from an air vent).



**DEVELOPER - JVC** 

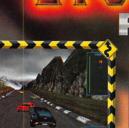
**PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM** 

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - EASY

**AVAILABLE - SEPTEMBER** 



Then the vehicle powers into life and the legend 'Impact Racing' appears! Next stop... the combat zone! And this is where things start to go slightly awry...

The game is very similar to Wipeout, except you blast your enemy to bits with machine guns and collect power-ups from the smoking remains. The game is action-packed, fast moving and full of cool poly-

gon (and adequate lighting) effects, but blighted with a number of problems that prevent it from becoming elevated to Wipeout status. Firstly, you've got a limited time (as usual), and the cars are constantly in your face, but there's no real feeling of being in the lead, as despite zooming, about maximum velocity, cars still pass you. Secondly (and this

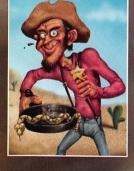
is a major gripe), the roadways themselves are far too narrow; to such an extent that there's little room for maneuvering tactics.

So, in short, they've taken a cool idea and presented the gamer with an adequate version of the racing genre with more flaws than entertainment. Racing fanatics might just find themselves lovin' it, but the rest of us should definitely 'steer clear' (ahem) of this one; this is nowhere near the quality of Wipeout XL.





MISSIE



**CHIEF HAMBLETON** Not much impact here, try some Wipeout XL.















t's shortly after the year 2060, and mankind is about to learn from its obsession with technology. In the future, our oceans are being used for everything – additional land, food cultivation, raw materials, and as a source of power. The Japanese, in a bold move, create 'Geothermal Taps,' which are constructed in the fault lines running close to Japan. These taps are built not only to harness power, but also to help stabilize the faults.

However, things soon go wrong. The fragile earth on which Japan rests gives way under a large series of earthquakes, and a majority of the Japanese Islands are lost to a watery grave. Russian forces quickly move in, taking over all that remains of them. However, the collapse of Japan was no accident: It was











DEVELOPER - GT INTERACTIVE

**PUBLISHER -GT INTERACTIVE** 

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

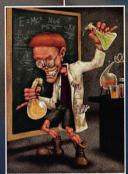
AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER











SHIDOSHI



# TIGERSHARK WORK IN PROBLESS: () Capyright 1000 in favor Inc.









planned, single-handedly, by a crazed Russian commander named Admiral Dmitri Konstantin. He built his own series of Taps, connected them to the Japanese ones, and did experiments on using the energy produced for means of destruction.

So opens GT Interactive's newest PlayStation title. Your job is to pilot the experimental vehicle, the Tigershark, and not only take out the Russian Taps, but Admiral Konstantin himself. Your craft is capable of both above and below water operation, and as you play you'll have to deal with enemy crafts in both regions. Whereas most games of this type tend to have a slower, more technical style of gameplay, Tigershark is closer to that of a fast-paced arcade game. The option to play either surfaced or submerged is a nice one: it makes for a package with quite a bit of possibility. Tigershark is only 65% done at this point, and rough in some areas, so we'll let you know more once it's progressed farther.









# REVIEW



**DEVELOPER - XING** 

PUBLISHER - T.HQ

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - EASY

**AVAILABLE - OCTOBER** 



eleased by Xing and Kokopeli a few months ago in Japan, Floating Runner has already been picked up by T•HQ for an American release. While it didn't exactly blow through charts or set record sales, it's encouraging to see small American companies porting over titles that would normally never see these shores. Floating Runner is a 100% free-roaming 3D platformer, employing classic run 'n' jump principles across 7 unique (and extremely colorful!) landscapes.

As far as gameplay goes, Floating Runner scores big for its freedom of movement and diverse level design. Across forest, sky, fire, desert, water, crystal,

badlands, and the darklands,
every stage offers new sights and
refreshing platforming challenges. The
fire world, for example, includes some pretty harrowing
platform sections. Timed jumps and perfect judgment is required, or a lava bath might become your
undue reward. Putting your platforming skills to
use in a 3D environment, no matter how bland the
flat polys may be at times, is still a novelty which
takes much time to wear thin. Don't for a moment
think that Floating Runner is the Mario 64 of PS 3D
platformers; gimme a break, it's not even on the same
planet. This is, ultimately, a very short game (despite its
total of 14 levels), that never gives one the sense of accomplishment needed in a platformer. For example, forget about
bonus levels – they ain't here. Bosses? One, and he's the last
guy in the game. And beyond the fun platform jumping

aspect of *FR*, you can forget about any real challenge...say it with me: *unlimited continues*.



GLITCH



















#### (Genso) Suikoden

Konami rocks! Being the kings that they are, they've opted to release the unbearably awesome RPG *Genso Suikoden* (shortened to just *Suikoden* in the US) here, and from the looks of these screens, they haven't changed a single name! Look for *Suikoden* before the end of the year.







#### Namco Museum Vol.2

The nostalgia-laden Namco Musem series continues Stateside with a package containing the first real shooter, *Xevious*, everyone's favorite policemouse *Mappy*, *Super Pac-Man* and the little-seen *Grobda*, *Gaplus* and *Dragon Buster*. Anyone born after 1975, however, will have to wait for volumes 4 and 5 before anything exciting comes along...





### NASCAR Racing

PC king Sierra On-Line's first console title is a port of Papyrus' incredibly popular (and incredibly realistic) racer, NASCAR Racing, and unfortunately is doesn't look vastly improved over the aging PC version. We'll have a review on this one ASAP.



## Iron & Blood

Dear Lord... can it be? Yes... another look at Acclaim's *Iron & Blood* in GameFan! Look for a review on this highly original AD&D fighter developed by Take 2 Interactive, the makers of Hell, in the next issue of GameFan. As it stands, we have only one thing to say: Matchovjuftick, magic power!









#### lecros Deception

One of the most original video games to come along in quite some time, *Tecmo's Deception* is a game in which *you* are the one laying traps and trying to kill the "good guys" who enter your castle. We apologize for not giving this one more attention, and we're going to try and give it a full-fledged review next issue. If it's out as you're reading this, seriously consider its purchase. This game is *very* cool.



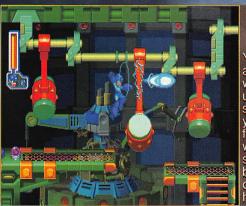












## MegaMan 8

Yeah, we know we just brought you half a page on MegaMan 8 last month, but we just received a new version and it's unbelievable. The first rev, the one you saw last month, was very cool but was your basic MegaMan fare. The new one far eclipses what we thought the game would be... Crazed parallax, so many sprites on screen it just hurts and a blazing collection of new weapons. This one comes out in December, so we'll have more very soon!













And now for something completely different... And why not? Remember League Bowling on the NEO-GEO? It actaully garnered quite a following. ASC's Ten Pin Alley smokes it by adding comedic overtones, mega animation and 100% polygonal playfields. You'll find a review in the Dec. GF Sports.











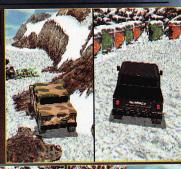
## Perfect Weapon

ASC games Perfect Weapon takes place across five hostile worlds featuring over 1300 pre rendered environments. The movement and cameras alike look up to the task. We'll review PW in December.



## Test Drive Offroad

Hummer, Jeep, Land Rover and Chevrolet-licensed *Test* Drive Offroad by Activision, has the potential to lead the off road genre. The vehicles look, sound and handle like the real thing and the courses are looking very promising.















It's Doom with a plotline... and a good one at that! Though only 25% done, Konami America's second game is looking awesome. There's as much thinking and puzzle-solving here as action, and it's about time - corridor games were beginning to get... hell, they've been old for nearly two years. Look for more BH soon!











WINTENDO'S LATEST TAKES YOU OUT ON THE WATER!

AN ALL-WEW INCREDIBLY REALISTIC RACING EXPERIENCE!!



CHOOSE FROM FOUR GAME MODES FOR ONE OR TWO PLAYERS! TRY CHAMPIONSHIP, TIME, SLALOM OR STUNT MODES!

















## NINE OBSTACLE-PACKED COURSES!



the general water effects; the undulating transparent waves lap and crash against unnerving realism. These are actual waves that are crashing here;

88 less

1

there's no glitching, no pop-up and nothing to indicate this water's made up of thousands of polygons blended seamlessly together. But the

real shock comes when your jetskier decides to take his (or character bobs up and down on wave affecting the jet-ski differently while a wake of frothing white water is left as you weave and dart about the ocean. You'll spend at least half an hour simply trying to fathom how such a spectacular effect is being displayed right there in front of you (contained on a

> you'd better snap out of some serious competitions ahead!

Single race modes teach newcomers the basics of the game, the Time Trial enables those already well the chance to better

their times and the Stunt option allows those without any care





**DEVELOPER - NINTENDO** 

**PUBLISHER - NINTENDO** 

FORMAT - CARTRIDGE

# OF PLAYERS - 1 or 2

DIFFICULTY - CHALLENGING

**AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER** 



**CHIEF HAMBLETON** SINCE I NEVER WASH I'VE **NEVER BEEN ONE FOR** WATER, BUT THAT'S ALL CHANGED NOW!!



64s began frantically looking for their next 64bit fix, and WaveRace became the third most eagerly awaited Nintendo 64 game. Excitement

successive versions of the game became more and more striking, and once we heard that the Great Game God Miyamoto was overseeing the project and had blessed it with his greatness, we were salivating with anticipation.

And now the nearest you can get to jetskiing without struggling into a rubber suit has arrived. We plugged in the cart and were treated to another demonstration of awe some 64-bit power. The first graphical feature you notice has to be







Al Madeina







#### RACE AGAINST THE COMPUTER AND THE CLOCK IN CHAMPIONSHIP MODEL

their advanced maneuvers. However, it is the Championship mode that's by far the most grueling and fun; take to the water with three other competitors and become the new Wave Race champion!

The premise is delightfully simple (and one that should be instantly familiar to anyone with Super Mario Kart in their Super NES collection); you've got to progress through seven different courses at maximum velocity, weaving between yellow and red buoys to avoid losing this speed. Of course, you've got three other contestants out to prove their worth and a load of obstacles to avoid (such as mines

(I), floating debris and other flotsam and jetsam). Finish first and you'll receive seven points, second gets four, third has two and fourth gets only one;



differently placed obstacles and tougher opponents.

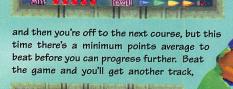
Complete it again on this harder setting and another

course appears with the action heating up

considerably before the real fun begins...

The screenshots speak volumes for themselves (more than words ever could), leaving me to explain the features of the courses on offer. The initial circuit is Sandy Beach; a regular oval track in a crystal blue ocean with beach huts, a calm ocean and flapping seagulls. Next is Sunset Bay... oh

the sunset, oh the lens flare of the sun, oh the translucent orange water effects... this is simply too breathtaking to take in; the dolphins playfully scooting about your ski (and being sil-





#### CHOOSE FROM FOUR PLAYERSI

Three gentlemen and one lady are available for this racing season, and as you'd imagine, they're blessed with differing attributes and disabilities. The delightful Micaela turns like greased lightning, but comes up short when asked to barge into any other competitor, while the reverse is true of the stout Razman, who corners like a dead haddock but can introduce any of his rivals to an extreme view of the surf with a swift shunt to the side at close quarters. Of the other two, Bubba-Gump is a good all-rounder and Tsunami is a speed freak. Take your pick, tweak the performance of your jet-ski and challenge all in a race for the Wave cup!

## FOUR COMPETITORS LINE UP FOR THE RACE OF A LIFETIME! CUSTOMIZE YOUR JET-SKI! ADJUST HANDLING, ENGINE AND













#### STUNT MODE ROCKS! ONLY THE HARDEST OF THE HARD NEED APPLY!







SCORE

01199



#### FLY THROUGH THE AIR AND THE WATER TO GET THROUGH THOSE HOOPS!!



One of the many disciplines included in this astounding title are Stunt versions of the courses you have completed. The object is to gain over 6000 points in one lap of your preferred course, and for those uninitiated in the ways of the wave, I'd recommend you try the one player mode until you're accustomed to the control (it'll take you at least a day to get over the graphics!). Once the Stunt course begins, your rider should head

for loops, building point multipliers for every successful pass, while the more advanced jet-skier can pile on the points by executing a variety of daredevil poses! Each hoop scores 50 points and they are essential if you want to reach first place on the stunt mode podium.

There's three awesome airborne maneuvers your rider can perform (while scooting about in choppy water, I might add); and these include the loop (pull your craft up and

over your head and back down again), the twist (swing the ski to the right and left before landing) and the submarine (actually dive underwater after a jump!). Cooler still are the wild (and often hilarious) stances your character can adopt during a race. These are

the Handstand (hands on the bar grips but feet high in the air!), the Hood Hop (spin onto the front of the ski and face the cameral), the Mad Stance (stand atop your vessel and control with



your feet!) and finally, the Somersault (leap into the air without your jet-ski while in motion!). Have you the nerve and skill to master all these moves, and use them in the competition mode? Oh, one final point is the time limit. While it might make sense to retry some jumps for additional points you probably only have enough time for one extra leap







before crossing the finish line with a few seconds to spare. Don't bother! You can score big if you cross the finish line with plenty of time left on the clock. These points are added to your overall score and more often than not this is what puts you in first place.

02633

all score and more often than not this is what puts you in first place.

We managed a first place in all the stunt tracks and nothing new appeared but that's not to say that Nintendo hasn't added any secrets. What about when you finish championship mode on the very hard setting? Chance to race the courses backwards anyone? To find this out and much more check out our continued coverage in the next issue of GameFan.











CONTINUES! TAKE ON BLACK SUN AND THE EMPIRE

ne of the greatest movie licenses ever has finally been revealed in an almost complete form. The GameFan staff spent three whole days dissecting a 70% finished version of one of the most eagerly awaited titles of the decade while chatting with some of the development team responsible for this mammoth undertaking. The game features breath-taking

scenery, a cast of familiar (and not so familiar faces) and an epic struggle of good over evil in a



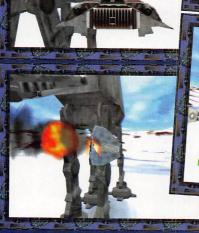


#### STAGE 1: WHO WILL WIN THE BATTLE OF HOTH?!

assumption that Nintendo would meet the specifications, which they did." LucasArts went on to comment that the Nintendo 64 hardware was excellent to get to grips with: "Everyone is still learning about hardware when a new machine comes out. Just look at the Super NES games five years ago compared to these days. There's always scope for

improvement so we demanded a certain level of performance and were happy that the N64 gave us that." This 'performance' was even changed later into the project when Nintendo "actually improved the hardware. Two or three times they improved the specifications from what they originally told us."

The title continued to



galaxy far away...

Tow Cable did not attach

The name of this game? Shadows of the Empire. The system of choice? The Nintendo 64.

It was surprising to learn just exactly when LucasArts began the Shadows project: "We started developing in September 1994. We worked for nine months on an Onyx Workstation without any kind of hardware, on the

STAGE 2: CAN DASH RENDAR ESCAPE FROM ECHO BASE?



### THE ASTEROID FIELD IS THE DAUNTING SETTING FOR STAGE

be shaped and molded, and seeing the success of the Star Wars-related novels, LucasArts chose a setting and character for the game itself (Shadows takes place between The Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi). LucasArts decided not to base the game directly on the novel because each separate LucasArts-related game company "takes on a different skew or focus.



For example, [the team who created] Dark Forces focused on Boba Fett. Shadows focuses on Dash Rendar, who is a secondary character in the novel, but we thought it was important that he could do a lot in the game that would be fun for the player. Han Solo and Luke aren't really available to us." For me, Dash seems the perfect choice as the hero

of this quest; a tough no-nonsense, tough-talking bounty hunter and buddy of Han Solo. If anyone can infiltrate Imperial bases, fly through waves of Tie fighters and go head-to-head with Boba Fett, this grizzled mercenary can!

After months of build-up, excited waiting and glimpses of levels at various trade shows, Shadows of glimpses of levels at various trade shows, Shadows of the Empire is almost set and ready to back up the American onslaught of the Nintendo 64. The finished game has ten levels available to any budding Jedi, with numerous options (difficulty setting,

passwords, et cetera) and that instant *Star Wars* ambiance that LucasArts is so famed for. As you'd expect, this is a graphical feast unmatched by anything out there (unless you're counting other N64 titles), and despite a few reservations

(such as slightly limp explosions, glitching, a lack of enemies, and some misting problems) this looks to be another piece of

gaming heaven...

STAGE 4: THE ORD MANTELL JUNKYARD





Before we launch into the game properly, let's address the perceived problem of audio on the cartridgebased N64. First, you don't notice a lack of sound quality anywhere in this game, and with good reason. Let the LucasArts developers take up the

story... "The music is taken directly from the original Skywalker sound archives. It isn't CD or anything like that, but from the original source, so it's the purest form. We took snippets from each level and looped them to about 15 minutes in length because you can't have a whole CD full of sound on a cartridge. The problem is the music takes up a lot of space on a cartridge, but we compressed a lot. We thought this was worthwhile because it gives you a true Star Wars expe-

rience, which demands a certain kind of



**DEVELOPER - LUCASARTS** 

**PUBLISHER - NINTENDO** 

FORMAT - CARTRIDGE

# OF PLAYERS - 1

**DIFFICULTY - VARIABLE** 

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER 2ND



CHIEF HAMBLETON THE FORCE IS SO STRONG!









"We started developing in September 1994. We worked for nine months on an Onyx Workstation without any kind of hardware, on the assumption that Nintendo would meet the specifications, which they did." - Mark Haigh-Hutchinson, Project Leader







#### STAGE 5: WATCH YOUR STEP AT GALL SPACEPORT

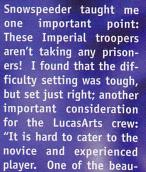
music. The listener expects that orchestral, John Williams score. We chose the music very carefully and took some from the new *Shadows of the Empire* soundtrack. It really enhances the game."

Talking of the game, what's the title actually like to play? For me, the first adrenaline-soaked stage is

still my current favorite. After I'd picked my jaw up from the floor, I began frantically weaving my snowspeeder towards the advancing Imperial forces as they attacked my Rebel Hoth Radio chatter cut in, laser fire rocked my craft, and hydraulics from the legs of the Imperial AT-ST walkers could even be heard as they grinded away in the background. I was playing the film; it was as simple as that. But when those AT-ATs zoomed into my field of vision... I sat silently in awe, before exploding into shouts of "Red Five standing by!" and "Stay on target!" I swung my snowspeeder about and headed right for the legs, zooming straight through them while my CPU wingmen peeled off to take down the other two AT-ATs. With the piercing shrill of laser fire all around, I headed straight for the AT-AT's neck... and was shot to fragments in a matter of seconds... Oops.

The demolition of my

like ge is



ties of the hardware is that you can basically have the CPU available to do AI while the other hardware is doing the rendering, which is nice because you now have a 90 megahertz CPU available just to do the game stuff rather than worrying about drawing scenes. Look at the Hoth battle scene. Those guys [Imperial walkers] are tracking you. They could nail you. I had to tone those guys down considerably. The scope is certainly there for us to do a lot more. You've just got to make it fun. It could be the most intelligent boss in the world but if it just kills you outright, what's the point? You have to get the balance right."

Space prevents me from detailing the remaining levels in the

same manner as the Hoth battle extravaganza, but let's just say I was extremely excited by the whole package. The majority of the later levels take place through

the eyes of Dash as he draws his laser pistol (the Han Solo variety) and guns down Snowtroopers, Wampas and even that king of the Star Wars mythos, Boba Fett (who eventually tires of your puny attempts and clambers into Slave I to finish you off!). The camera

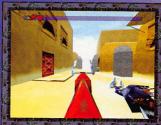
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TAGE 6: SWOOP BIKES RACE TO VICTORY THROUGH MOS EISLEY AND BEGGARS CANYON!!





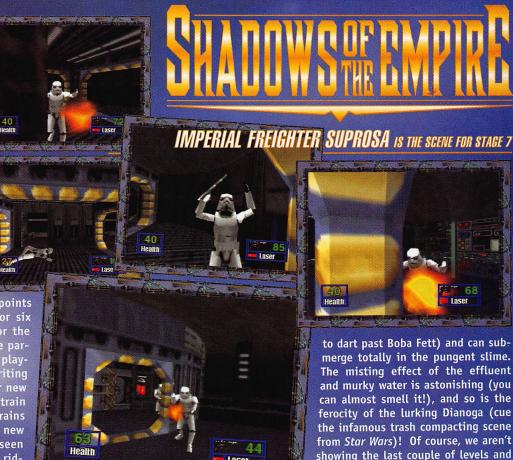


can be changed to eye-view, behind Dash, ceiling and Resident Evil viewpoints. Real Star Wars fans will lap up the inclusion of IG-88 (robotic Bounty Hunter with attitude) as a boss at the end of the Junkyard stage, which has Dash leaping from train carriages and ducking overhead beams as the carriage in front explodes and sinks into a swamp...

This change in stage design between levels has always been part of the LucasArts ideal, and the developers stressed this point: "We put a lot into this game that people haven't really seen before

in a video game. One of the strong points is that Shadows is more like five or six games in one. We wanted a lot for the player to experience rather than one particular genre. This is great for the player, but difficult for us; it's like writing five games. We also give the player new experiences; take for example the train level. I can't recall seeing any 3D trains in a video game before. This is a new kind of environment. Everyone's seen those Western movies with people riding the top of trains. We're giving you this new experience in the appropriate Star Wars environment."

The fun doesn't end with the destruction of IG-88, either. There's a frantic race at mind-numbing speeds through Mos Eisley on new versions of Speederbikes (known as Swoop bikes), where you'll have to ram your fellow racers before they intercept a certain Mr. Skywalker (watch for the Sarlaac pit beasts!), and then of course, there's the Imperial Sewers. Oh, did we have fun on this level! For a start, Dash is equipped with a jetpack (used previously



netic proportions! You cannot resist the power... of the Dark side! Shadows of the Empire is rumored to be currently undergoing final tweaking by Mr. Miyamoto himself (we know the force is with him!), but, whether this is true or not, the finished Shadows looks set to take America by storm, and I'm expecting to update you very shortly with a run-down of exactly what's on offer here. Until next issue, loyal readers. May the force be with you... CH

the boarding of Skyhook to face Xizor

(pronounce that one!), but believe

me, the action increases to truly fre-



## PREVIEW



**DEVELOPER - RARE** 

**PUBLISHER - NINTENDO** 

FORMAT - CARTRIDGE

# OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

**AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER 25** 







the Killer Instinct story started almost two years ago when it appeared in selected arcades across the country. Advertised as the first ever entirely SGI-rendered fighting game on the market, KI also promised a perfect home translation. because the arcade motherboard was in essence an early N64 (then titled the Ultra 64 until a name patent in Japan prevented it) motherboard. Aside from teasing hard-core gamers with such promises, KI delivered new innovations like Auto-Doubles, Ultimates and Combo Breakers in a genuinely groundbreaking formula. All of these factors made KI a solid fighting game, and at most arcades generated as much competition between gamers as (dare I say it?) the all-mighty Street Fighter.

Here we are almost two years later and we've seen KI2 hit the arcades with yet more additions and just as much player competition. Now, step aside, unworthy fighters, and greet KI Gold, the long-awaited N64 sequel in the popular KI series (only Killer Instinct 1 made a SNES appearance, but sold millions). Not since the days of Tekken 2 has an arcade fighting game actually been made better for the home market. Folks, this ain't

just a conversion from heaven above, but it quite possibly could be the best 2-D fighter to come home for '96!

Killer Instinct Gold includes the entire original cast from Killer Instinct 2, and presents Jago, Fulgore, Combo, Kim Wu, Tusk, Maya, Orchid, Spinal, Glacius, Sabrewulf and Gargos in all their 64-bit glory. Unfortunately, the new characters which were expected have yet to be seen in any of the ROMs we have previewed. When questioned about this, Nintendo reps replied, "Which would your rather have? New characters. and an unbalanced game? Or no new characters and a balanced game?" We get the

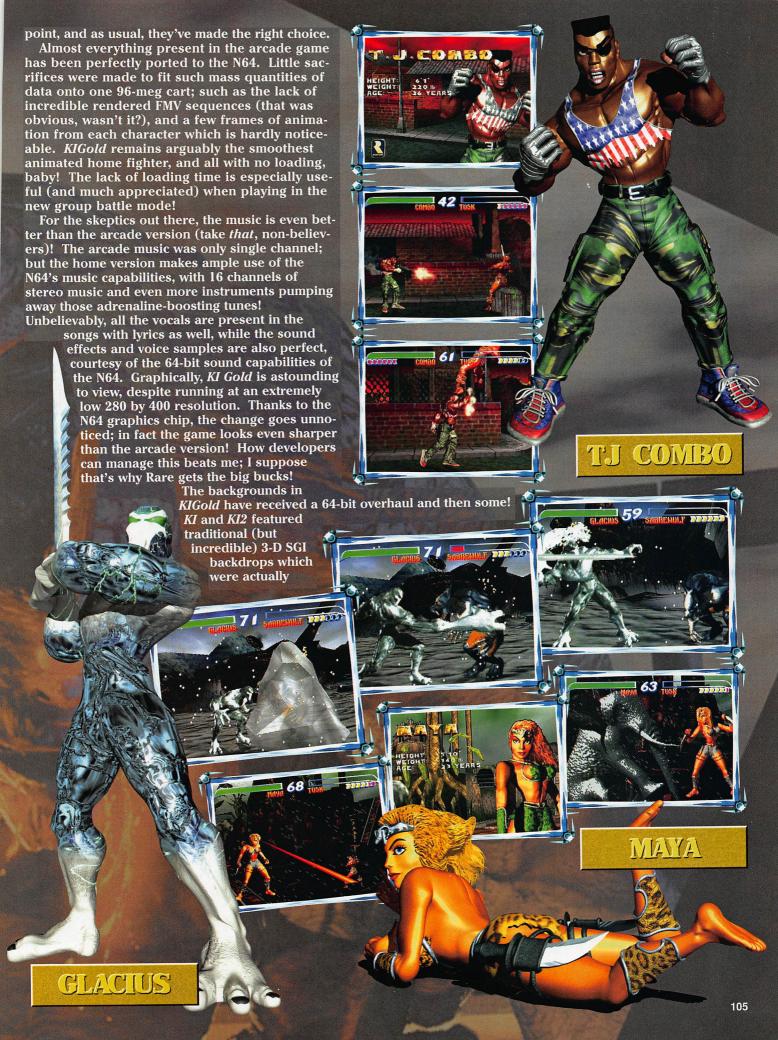


MR. GOO TIME TO PLAY HARD WITH THE 64-BIT FEELIN'!



ORCHID

OK, OK, NO
MORE LETTERS,
HERE'S "THAT SHOT"
OF ORCHID ONE
MORE TIME!





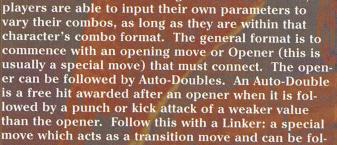
streamed FMV; a process many thought impossible to replicate on the N64, let alone on a cartridge format. The 3D stages in KIGold are of course, arcade perfect. Some changes were made, but for the better. For example Combo's stage in the

arcade was nothing more than a pseudo-3D floor (looking more like a Mode-7 trick) and a flat, pasted background which was in much need of more parallax scrolling. Now Combo's stage is a 3D parking lot leading to a Metro station. Amazingly, Rare actually paid attention to little details like changing the lighting on the characters to match the flashing red and green lights when they're duking it out beside the loading area. Actual buildings and fences are now present and rendered on the fly (wait 'til you see the awesome pan-in shot at the beginning of a round!); trash cans are also thrown into the mix, and can be knocked over when a player lands on them. All these additions are made possible because of the lower resolution (best I've ever seen!), and the fact that the characters on screen are not polygons but sprites. To keep a frame rate of 60fps, the antialiasing is turned off, but yet again this is hardly noticeable. Perhaps the best improvement to Combo's background is the addition of a stage fatality; when standing beside the tracks, the final knock-

out blow sends your foe high into the air, landing on the tracks in front of an oncoming train! As for the FMV backgrounds, they have been converted to 3D backgrounds like Combo's stage. They all remain as visually stunning as the arcade (just wait until you get a load of Jago's stage!). It's simply perfection!

The gameplay remains identical to KI2. The big (and I mean big) combos found in the arcade are all present in the home conversion. Using a set combo format,

65 ...



68



JAY GO









TITLE COMPANY ETA GENRE

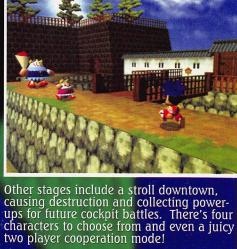
KONAMI DECEMBER (JAPAN) ACTION PLATFORM This is a full-on polygon 3D adventure based on the Goeman series in which you must defeat certain obstacles before you can progress. There's also a Mecha combat stage and your movement will fully utilize the 3D stick.











TITLE COMPANY ETA GENRE

ROBOTECH GAMETEK DECEMBER (USA) SHOOTER



Robotech continues to impress with

huge polygon robots battling through space. Multiple camera angles and smooth scrolling are promised...

Another month, another load of shots from the Freak Boy stable! This seems to be coming along nicely, with polygons added to both characters and scenery. Look at that sky!

TITLE COMPANY ETA GENRE

FREAK BOY
NY VIRGIN
FIRST OTR '97 (USA)
ACTION PLATFORM













TITLE COMPANY ETA GENRE

REV LIMIT SETA FIRST OTR '97 (JAPAN) ARCADE RACING



somewhere before...

Customize your car, and race with real-time damage! Hey, I've seen that Castrol Celica

DEMO

TITLE DUEL HEROES
COMPANY HUDSON
ETA UNKNOWN (JAPAN)
GENRE FIGHTING
Gai and Zen (red and blue

Gai and Zen (red and blue) are the characters so far revealed in this super-hero based fighter.



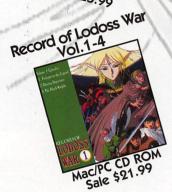






# The many worlds of ANALYMENT AND ANALYMENT ANALYMENT AND ANALYMENT AND ANALYMENT ANALYME













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## VIRGIN INTERACTIVE AND GAMEFAN ANNOUNCE THE RACE FOR THE FLAGS CONTEST!

Win Two Days FREE at a Six Flags Amusement Park for you and three guests courtesy of Virgin Interactive! ONE GRAND PRIZE

Hidden throughout this issue of GAMEFAN are **Grid Runner Flag Icons that look like this:** (Be sure to count the one pictured here!)

Just like the action characters in Grid Runner, your goal is to find and "get" flags so that you can be successful in this contest. Count the flags and send your answer to us. Those readers who respond with the correct number of flags will be eligible for a drawing for the fabulous prizes provided by GAMEFAN and Virgin Interactive, the makers of Grid Runner.



## Grand Prize — One Winner (Party of Four)

- Four passes for two days and one night at the nearest Six Flags Amusement Park.
- Two rooms for one night at a hotel/motel near Six Flags
- Transportation to and from Six Flags
- One game system and one copy of Grid Runner
- One year subscription (or extension) to GAMEFAN magazine

## First Prize - Three Winners (each winner receives)

- One copy of Grid Runner
- One copy each of two other Virgin Interactive games
- One game system
- One year subscription (or extension) to GAMEFAN magazine

## Second Prize - Ten Winners (each winner receives)

- One copy of Grid Runner
- One year subscription (or extension) to GAMEFAN magazine



## "(Grid Runner is) unique, challenging and packed with addictive gameplay..." - GAMEFAN magazine









10 Second Prizes

Winners will be selected by a random drawing from all contest entries containing the correct number of flags in this November 1996 issue of GAMEFAN.



## RAGE FOR THE FLAGS! CONTEST

I COUNTED \_\_\_\_ GRID RUNNER FLAG ICONS

NAME\_\_\_\_\_AGE\_\_\_\_\_\_ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP\_

PHONE\_

http: www.gamefan.com

Send entry to: GAMEFAN magazine

GRID RUNNER: RACE FOR THE FLAGS! 5137 Clareton Drive Suite 210, Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Contest open to United States residents only (excluding Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico). All winners will be notified by mail. Each entry must include your name and address written legibly. Any illegible responses will be excluded. Multiple entries accepted, but each must be postmarked separately. The deadline for all entries is February 15, 1997 and must arrive at the GameFan address by that date. All entries must arrive by the deadline to be eligible. Virgin Interactive, GameFan and Metropolis Publications are not responsible for late or lost mail. Employees of Virgin Interactive, GameFan and their affiliates are not eligible. Fourteen (14) winners including one (1) Grand Prize winner will be selected by the GameFan judges, who shall have complete and sole discretion in selecting the winners. All decisions are final. Any and all taxes are the sole responsibility of the winners. Winners release Virgin Interactive and GameFan and their subsidiaries and affiliates in all matters relating to the use of prizes. No substitution of prizes or cash equivalents allowed. One prize per family. Winners grant permission to use their names, addresses and photos for advertising and promotional purposes without restriction or additional compensation. Contest void where prohibited by law, and otherwise governed by California laws.







SEGA SATURN **DEVELOPER - CLIMAX** 

**PUBLISHER - SEGA** 

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



**Merry Christmas?** 



IS CLIMAX'S **DARK SAVIOR TO** THE SATURN WHAT LANDSTALKER **WAS TO THE GENESIS?** 









One of a handful of games that shook me to my very core was LandStalker. At the time (1993) it was untouchable in both the action and role-playing categories. Now, some 3 years later Climax's next such game is upon us, and although it's not a sequel, and definitely not as ground-breaking as its predecessor, it is one of the year's best Action RPGs. A new fighting system has been added to the isometric polygonal formula, the puzzles and character interaction remain intest and as usual

acter interaction remain intact and as usual Climax delivers an inspired soundtrack.

DS's most unique aspect, however, is its use of parallels. Each time you end a quest you awake to another, longer, harder one (oh, I don't like the sound of that). There are 5 par-

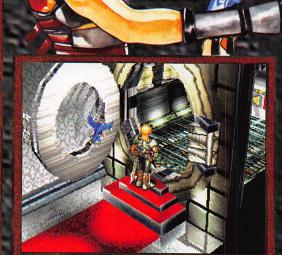
allels that we know of, making Dark Savior one of the longest games of its kind. Still better news, however, is that rather than an import review, this is an

American preview. DS hit Japan in August and will arrive here this November/December. A mere 4 month window. Perhaps SOA's new Japanese CEO has something to do with this?
Either way, it's high time Sega
sped these games our way

before they become relics. Look for a DS review in the next GF and an in-depth strategy guide in issue 2 of MegaFan.

















ADVENTURE

Ryu never knows what's waiting for him next. Here he takes to the rails in a crazy mining cart ride. Careful – Dr. Jones was the last guy through here!





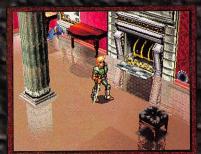
















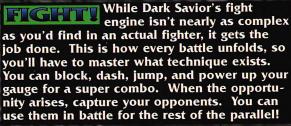














Dark Savior's fully adjustable, panning, zooming, twisting camera is the best one I've ever encountered. All polygonal action games should have one of these hot numbers. Man, could I have used this in LandStalker.











## AFTER 47 YEARS.

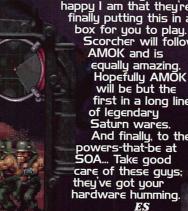
...and Scavenger released AMOK-GameFan's cover story, FEB. 1996. An upstart company bursting with talent, Scavenger has gone at their own pace, made the best distribution deal possible for their amazing line-up of software and are now finally ready to share it with the rest of us. The AMOK you're seeing here is a IOO% buttoned up, ready-to-play version. In fact, you may be playing it by the time this issue hits the stands. What makes AMOK such a celebrated title amongst industry and press is what makes all Scavenger games so impressive: its 3D engine. All of Scavengers games use patented Scavenger engines and they are

regarded (to those who have seen them) as revolutionary. They take up to a year to make, but oh, the end to a year to make, but on, the end result... freshness! As you can see, these vast lands in which you can travel anywhere at a blistering pace, are not polygonal. There are no ugly fake dirt texture maps, no clipping and they look completely different than anything else in 32-bit land. Of course, where you lose the annoy-ance of textures, you pick up grow-ing pixels, but it's a fair trade. If I play another Krazy Ivan or Ghen War clone, I'm gonna toss some cookies. The enemies (nasty fat little killers) are also, thankfully, not of the polygon way. So they actually look like



little people, not dolls constructed from hordes of triangles. These vivid little sprites appear to have thickness as well. I'll tell ya, these guys are good! I can't stop playing AMOK. It evokes such a mood from the second you begin it's like playing on new hardware. And gameplay, you want gameplay? AMOK will not be beaten in a day. No way. You'll have to play in hard mode to progress beyond mission 2 and that means memorizing the location of each infantry, secret retreat (shoot the walls), land mine, etc... the list is long. Each mission is a game unto itself and the control... straight out of heaven, as is the soundtrack. I find it odd that I've been playing 32-bit Scavenger games for over a year and the public has yet to experience one. I can't tell you how happy I am that they're

happy I am that they're finally putting this in a box for you to play. Scorcher will follow AMOK and is equally amazing. Hopefully AMOK will be but the first in a long line of legendary Saturn wares And finally, to the powers-that-be at SOA... Take good care of these guys; they've got your hardware humming.



DO NOT **ADJUST** YOUR TELEVISION. YOU ARE ENTERING, THE **SCAVENGER** ZONE.





LAYOUT - E. STORM



SEGA SATURN DEVELOPER - AWAY TEAM

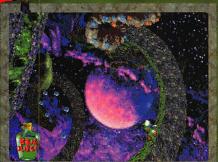
PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - N/A

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



## "IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE A BUG BARF!"

We're seeing more and more of the first BUG! sequel every month. This time, we've been bugging around with Bug and his pals through some killer new locations. I'm amazed by not only the sheer magnitude of levels but by their gargantuan size as well. There's a lot... a ton, of polygons moving around here.

Space Corkscrew, one of the many unique,



new, redesigned levels (buttoned up in this version) features dizzying rotation effects. More than a couple passers-by gazed in my office window at the sight of this craziness. The bonus levels are shaping up too, and now include a unique event that has you racing your Bug convertible (yeah, I get it) through a chaotic (and very fun) first person space race.

first person space race.
Bug's control seems
tighter than ever and his
new moves (Bug can now
dash, hover and has
unlimited Bug Juice.

unlimited Bug Juice, yummy) give the game a much needed dose of diversity. Bug's dog is just as cool. Superfly however... I refuse to play. This is a lame character and so far BUG TOO!'s only flaw, in my eyes. It's just too cliche for my taste. Trends die (this one will hopefully be burned at the stake), but good games don't... 'nuff said. I'll have



troubles ignoring him however and enjoying this much anticipated (and much improved) BUG! sequel. The next time you see BUG TOO! in GF it'll be for the final play test. It is safe to say however that BUG! fans will likely be elated when BUG TOO! rolls around in November. Sega's new star is shining brighter than ever. ES

"I'M BUG'S DOG.
WHY A BUG HAS A
DOG WE'LL PERHAPS
NEVER KNOW."







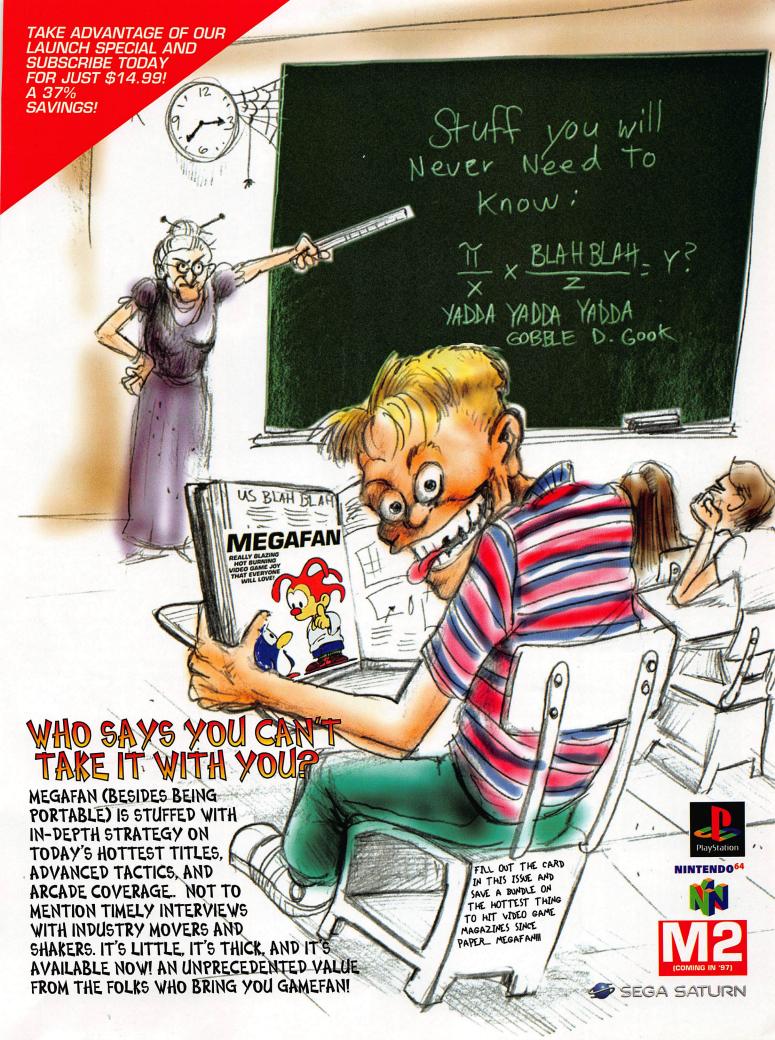




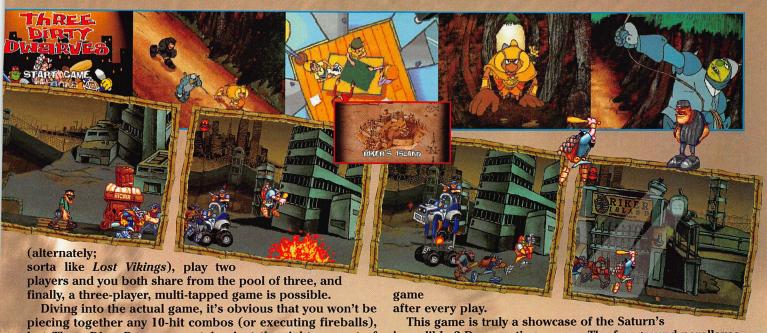












but Three Dirty Dwarves contains just the right amount of moves necessary for its brand of fighting. Toss up baseballs and bat them into the craniums of your foes, or roll strikes with bowling balls that pound into the shins of bad guys; it's all for humor, and always in bad (but good!) taste. Get in close and you can throw their Orc butts, or, if they're in the background, blow 'em apart with shotgun blasts and cock-

incredible 2-D computing power. The foreground parallaxes, the floor line scrolls, the backgrounds scale, the segmented bosses scale and rotate, the characters are ultra-colorful and animate like mini-cartoons (good cartoons), and the frame rate is blazing fast. The Saturn sound chip blasts out some impressive PCM funk, and the effects are loud and clear. Let's just say if there was ever to be a Comix Zone 2 made for the Saturn, I

> would trust these developers to make perfect heads or tails of a video game comic world.



Pummelfest '96, use the Morph Dwarf mode to combine your threesome into one titanic mauler with a berserker rage that nobody can resist. The biggest piece of advice I could give 3DD players is this: Always keep all of your Dwarves alive. When they're down, hit 'em right away and they'll be back

on their feet, ready for action. Learn the bizarre boss patterns well - whether it's steering a wrecking ball into a building with a dragon inside or playing baseball against a team of Orcs, you'll be enthralled by the lunacy of it all. The combination of side-scroll brawling, puzzle solving, amazingly

creative boss encounters, and the strategies of maintaining three healthy Dwarves in any situation help to make Three Dirty Dwarves a memorable

If action-adventure/side-scrollers are your thing (they should be everyone's thing!), do yourself a favor and check out Three Dirty Dwarves. It's just one of those titles you go back to again and again 'cause "I know I can kill that one guy this time" and enjoy every second doing it. It's the kind of game that'll have you stop to shout, "No way!" (especially when you see those freakin' bosses) and then play onward to see the next strange encounter. Highly original, long, tough, and a joy to play, Three Dirty Dwarves is a winner.









## REVIEW

## POWERSLA



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - LOBOTOMY

PUBLISHER - P.I.E.

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER

aturn owners seem to be getting a raw deal concerning 3D Doom-style games, with only the 'Doom-on-a-rug' Magic Carpet appearing to stop the gap, while PlayStation owners can remain content with the release of not one but two Dooms on their system. All this is about to change however, with the arrival

of a new breed of 3D shooting/action; coupling mindless violence with thought and cunning, not to mention jumping and some sparkling light-sourced projectiles. Powerslave (most aptly described

as 'Doom-in-Egypt') is here, and whisks you away on a mission to uncover terrifying secrets of Egyptian gods that have laid uncovered for thousands of years... Dare you don your desert-camouflage pantaloons and enter the towering pyramids of terror on a desperate quest where insanity and mayhem beckon? Well, only if you want to play the finest

Doom-style game ever seen on the Saturn...

I greatly enjoyed my excursion into the hideous labyrinths of Egypt for a number of reasons; not least because of the incredible atmosphere this game generates. I've been interested in Egyptology for

years, and was immediately sucked into the world of the

Pharaohs when my exploration took me inside an ancient tomb complete with authentic hieroglyphics adorning the walls, crumbling cave systems with wooden supports

creaking and whistling clifftops where vertigoinducing jumps need to be performed. There's much more interaction with the scenery in this game; rock faces and antique caskets can be destroyed with mystic weapons, those leaps of faith will have you on the edge of your seat and there's frantic swimming sections where







CHIEF HAMBLETON
"HAIL TO THE
PHARAOH, BABY!"









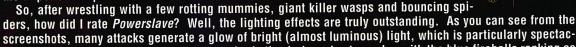




you're simultaneously swiping at gnashing piranhas while thrashing for air. Powerslave (aka Exhumed) also features puzzles so fiendish you'll be ripping out your hair and frothing at the mouth; a full compliment of creaking and groaning sounds and the most sickening bone crunching spot effects when you don't quite make that all-important jump and

end up plummeting downward into a molten lava pit!

PowerSlave steals and tweaks shamelessly from a whole host of earlier 3D games. The game structure is very like *Hexen*, as you have the option of revisiting any of the earlier levels when power-ups (which take the form of archaic artifacts) have been gained. Monsters are somewhat unique, but as a professional Doomster, I must admit that the dog-headed fireball throwers reacted with extremely similar intelligence to the brown Imps of the id game. Finally, I was also surprised to be using almost identical detonation devices to those supplied to me when I slipped into my rebel uniform and thwarted the Imperial troops of Dark Forces...





ular in the darkened catacombs, with the blue fireballs ranking as the best light-sourced effect ever seen on a 32-bit console! Monsters fit the atmosphere perfectly, and although 2D, they move convincingly (except perhaps for the birds) and pursue you ruthlessly. Finally, the control is mostly excellent; with rapid-fire gunning, strafing and jumping all catered for. Just don't expect to move sideways and jump every time if you're holding the deformed US joypad; these spongy-buttoned, badly-designed pads should really be ritually burnt in favor of the Japanese versions if you're really out to enjoy Powerslave.

Only a couple of points prevent this from beating the legendary Doom. Firstly, there's a lack of variety in the enemies, and there's

not enough of them in the levels to begin with. Secondly, those jumps sometimes require pin-

point precision, with failure meaning instant death, sending you right back to the level start; I would have preferred my hero to flounder in the lava before discovering a secret passage just in the nick of time... Thirdly, the weapons are sometimes novel, but are mainly just tweaked versions of those seen countless times before; if I have to kill one more enemy with a chaingun... Finally, some of the puzzles are just a little too cunning; at one point I actually had to fall down a bottomless pit and scrabble for a ledge in the dark...

I can definitely forgive Powerslave these small failings as Lobotomy software have delivered one stunning game which I have no hesitation in recommending to Saturn owners. Praise be to the designers for trying something new and creating the Egyptian setting so admirably, and having the ability to include new(ish) and involving gameplay plus a real sense of tension into the bargain. This will certainly tide you over until Doom (finally) gets a release....



















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SURVIVAL

the PlayStation. Of course, neither version matches the arcade, which actually shows the big Russian's teeth sparkle...

Moving on, the music is identical; cool arrangements of the arcade, but loading times are much quicker on the Saturn (sometimes by over two seconds), plus the Saturn has a gray rock face with the SFA2 logo etched on it. Much better than the blank 'Now Loading' screen on the Sony machine. However, with

sample quality, the PlayStation wins with crystal clear samples; the Saturn being lumbered with slightly muffled effects and speech. But there are slightly more hit connection noises on the

Sega machine...

Backgrounds look the same to me, although Glitch reckoned the Saturn had more layers of parallax. Fearing I was sinking further into the depths of sadness ("Hey Glitch, just how many frames of animation does the elephant with the apple have?"), I'll pass over this, and instead throw my weight behind the Saturn. Sure, the PlayStation version is excellent, but the Saturn has six different costume colors, bigger characters and survival mode. Plus, your combos are easier to pull off here. One final point: We could only get the 99-hit combo glitch (see last month's Hocus Pocus) against Sodom to work on the PlayStation. Bottom line: if you've only got one of the two systems, then buy that version. If you've got both machines, they buy the Saturn version. Simple when you think about it.

Saturn-owning fans of this extremely polished (not to mention highly merchantable) beat'em-up have another reason to rejoice as their system continues to churn out excellent

ues to churn out excellent arcade translations (plus, the Japanese Saturn pad is simply joyous to play the game with), and this is the perfect purchase; at least until the mighty Marvel Super Heroes lands in our laps. You won't find a finer 2D fighting











DEVELOPER - CAPCOM Publisher - Capcom

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1-2 DIFFIGULTY - MODERATE

AVAILABLE - 4TH QUARTER



CHIEF HAMBLETON SHORYUUUUUKKKEEENNN! HADO-HADO-HADOKEN!





SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - RADICAL

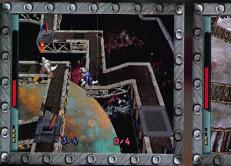
**PUBLISHER - VIRGIN** 

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY -BEGINNER.-ADV.

**AVAILABLE - OCTOBER** 





Buster Bros. We're even set for the comeback classic of the year with Robotron X. With next-gen graphics and sound, these old-timers become classics a second time around. These games are great, but I've been looking for a brand new "classic," born and bred in 32 bit, to make its appearance. Enter Grid Runner, an incredibly addictive 32-bit original with game-play straight outta the past. A new-age classic? Maybe...

Set in distant space, Grid Running is a violent sport open to only the most brutal of competitors from around the galaxy. As a Grid Runner, you are cast into an arena maze to find and seize flags. You are competing against a single opponent, one on one, who is also vying for possession of the flags. The arenas are always themebased, so fighting Neenot, for example, would yield an plant-laden gridwork, while Hexol, the mutant insect, fights on hexagonal hive grids. Opponents are allowed to fire on each other at will with stun guns, designed to immobilize, not kill. You also have the ability to "build" by creating temporary grids that allow you to connect to other parts of the maze.

Grid Runner may feature "classic" gameplay, but it looks and sounds 100% 32-bit. The overhead scrolling levels are constructed of awesome warping polygons, reminiscent of Loaded. Below this

ack to basics!

lt's been really

tough, lately, n old-school

an gamer like myself to

find games with the kind of raw, kinetic fun, that

games of the past thrived on. Sure, we've had incredible updates of *Tempest*, *Defender*,

and recently Bomberman and

Buster Bros. We're even set for

0000

of awesome warping polygons, reminiscent of *Loaded*. Below this detailed gridwork you'll find parallaxing clouds, bubbling lava, lush vegetation, or the incredibly trippy rotating cosmos of the bonus rounds. Every colorful background is packed with art.

The music, a mix of techno-rock tracks, is also



**GLITCH** This is clearly the best version!

0 0 0 0

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really good and fits the on screen action very well. Some of the character designs could be better, but they're all nicely rendered, animate smoothly, and each has its own CG intro. An actual hands-on play-test of *Grid Runner* reveals excellent control, fantastic level design, and play-mechanics that will have you hooked in a second (the time it takes to get the play elements dialed in).

Grid Runner is a unique game and a welcome surprise in this time of 32-bit copycats. We've all become so accustomed to, and expectant of, a certain mold of games (3D fighters, for example) that we lose track of what got us here in the first place. GR may appear to be less of a game because of what's immediately seen as simple and unexciting, but, the fact is, Grid Runner triumphs within its simplicity, offering intense play and original design.







F Kids is Virtua Fighter II, cutified a thousand times over. VF Kids doesn't just have cuter characters, it has sped-up high-pitched Alvin & The Chipmunks voices, backgrounds that are full of happy faces, snowmen, fuzzy animals, and adorable facial expressions to accompany every move. If Hello Kitty makes you nauseous, playing this game will drive you stark, raving mad.

Otherwise, this game is basically Virtua Fighter II. The moves are the same, and have basically the same parameters (there are a few slight differences, but nothing that would throw off an average player's game). the game engine is basically the same, and the sound effects and music are just rearranged to be cuter, in a cartoony sort of way. The game moves a bit faster, and has Fighting Vipers-style mid-match instant replays, but once again, each character's moves and tactics haven't changed a bit.

There are a few cool additions to your optionS screen: You can now change the ring size, and randomize the order of the computer controlled



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - SEGA

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW













enemies. There's a "Kids Mode," in which the game gives younger players a helping hand by automatically choosing

fairly impressive-looking moves and combos whenever they just sit there and hammer away at the

punch and kick button; a nice way to handicap for little brother Billy.

VF Kids also has two new backgrounds (for Pai vs. Pai and Shun vs. Shun, which is especially cool), and adorable new FMV endings for each character. The other big addition is the "Combo Maker" mode. The Combo M

other big addition is the "Combo Maker" mode. The Combo Maker does what it promises, and you can save up to 20 custom combos on your system, but really, who cares? I mean, it's kind of fun to screw around with, but it's not like you can take them to the arcade or anything.

VF Kids is a very cool idea, and I'm glad they made it, and I'm glad it's out here, but on the other hand, I, um, have no real desire to play it. I mean, if I want to play

VF2, I'll play VF2. VF Kids is worth playing through 10 times to see all the endings, and you'll certainly enjoy it while you do. But otherwise there really isn't any reason to hold on to it, except for the bragging rights of owning every version of Virtua Fighter. In

TAKUHI UH, CUTE, GUYS, REAL CUTE...

making a new, cute version of Virtua Fighter, Sega refused to change any significant elements of playability, making Virtua Fighter Kids little more than a cosmetic upgrade. If you're into VF, I mean, bought-the-calendars-and-portrait-collections into VF, then this would be a valuable addition to your collection. But if you're a casual user, you'll probably want to save that money for a game you don't already own. **T** 

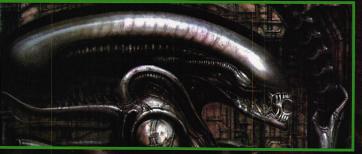




















nyone who's viewed theatrical version 1 or 2 (we won't mention 3), knows that Aliens was a series ripe for gamedom. It's become the only Doom like adventure to feature a female (Ripley) lead, enjoyed huge success on the Jaguar and is now selling, I'm sure quite well.

nationwide. We apologize for the late review, but Acclaim's notorious for getting us reviewables just as the game releases. As

ALLEN TRILOGY

100

Ripley, you're sent on a wide variety of missions, requiring you to traverse an infested colony, a large prison block, and eventually the aliens' lair. This is definitely *Trilogy*'s strong point; instead of simply running around, trying to get out of each stage as you do in *Doom*,

each level of *Trilogy* has a specific task which must be completed. Some stages are pretty straightforward; go in and eliminate any alien infestation etc.... Others are more complex, such as finding survivors and grabbing their ID tags, or shutting off damaged systems so recovery teams

recovery teams
can come in.
This adds welcome variety to
the experience, and
helps break
the monotony
inherent in many a
3D corridor game.

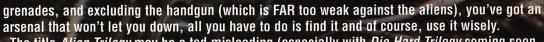
Each are has that distinct *Aliens* feel, motion tracker chirping... eerie silence, acidic beasts. All the destructive force from the movie series are here, the Pulse Rifle, Smart Gun, Flamethrower, along with the required handgun and shotgun. Combine these with secondary











The title Alien Trilogy may be a tad misleading (especially with Die Hard Trilogy coming soon. which does indeed cover all three movies). Alien Trilogy isn't 100% based on the movies; it's more along the lines of 'Inspired by Aliens 2 and 3 with some new stuff.' On one hand, I can see why Alien (the first) wasn't included - there was all of ONE alien in it. But on the other, it would have been cool to go on a sort of hide-and-seek mission to find it, maybe before a timer runs out, or before it kills all of your shipmates.

If you're looking for Alien Trilogy to prove, once and for all, that the Saturn can do a burning Doom-style games, I'm not confident you'll be 100% satisfied. There's no pseudo light sourcing 'ala Loaded, and your surroundings tend to suffer from slight clipping. The lack of such features don't steal away Trilogy's









SEGA SATURN

**DEVELOPER - PROBE** 

**PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM** 

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

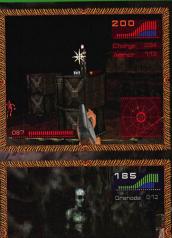
AVAILABLE - NOW

















overall appeal but would have been welcome in any case. My biggest, and only real criticism lies in Trilogy's targeting system. Auto aiming is sorely needed but does not exist. If your enemy is on the floor or ceiling, you must manually aim higher or lower. To do so, you have to hold Z, use Y or B to look up or down, and then keep holding Z until you want to return to nor-

mal. This is a major pain, especially when a swarm of facehuggers, who scurry frantically looking for a face, are swarming you. Having to do this will drive you mad at first, and while it does get somewhat better once you're used to it, it's still annoying and can cost you precious health in the heat of battle. Otherwise Alien Trilogy is finely produced. While Alien Trilogy doesn't "push the Saturn to new heights", it's one of the best movie to game translations currently available, is plenty long, and very challenging, both strategically and in terms of pulse pounding action. I await Alien ressurection and hopefully... 64-bit conversions.



Acclaim's Iron Man/X-O Manowar in Heavy Metal is the Comic book action game fans have been waiting for. Imagine! Comic book heroes NOT in a fighting game, what a novel idea! IMXO's game environment is reminiscent of Skeleton Warriors and Clockwork Knight but takes it a step further by allowing you to fire into the background, a hot feature. Although incomplete and crashing like a mutha' at press time, the game shows great promise. The rendered sprites look great at this point but a few extra frames of animation in certain areas would be greatly appreciated. The music is as to be expected... Metal, and plenty of it. This could easily become Acclaim's best Saturn action effort yet. The folks at Realtime will undoubtedly button it up tightly and deliver us a shining finished game by the close of the December GameFan. Don't miss it!











TEMPEST 2000, one of the few truly celebrated laguar titles is on its way to the Saturn and PS. The Saturn version's a shell of the PS game so far but even so, it's the game we all love, overflowing with hot techno, bursting with color and more addicting than an overdose of Frappuccino. We'll review Interplay's Saturn version next month.



another
PlayStation hand-me-down is
on the way! Yes! More scraps
please! Why they take games
made to take advantage of the
PS hardware and stuff them
into the Saturn I do not understand. Krazy Ivan without hot
FMV and light sourcing is hard
to imagine. Find out if they
pulled it off next month.

















300 animators, nine months and over 70,000 hand painted animation cels. That's Shadoan from V.I.P. "The best animated Fantasy/Adventure game ever." We hope to bring you lots more on this much-touted Saturn/PS/Mac/CD-I title in the next issue.



## MECHWARRIOR 2

The game that would light up keyboards around the country was a no-brainer for console portage. Not only is this version upgraded but you can play it with a comfy Saturn controller in your hands. The award-winning Jeehun crafted the amazing musical score and Activision assures us the Saturn game won't let hard-core Mech fans down. Find out more in the December GameFan.





















I'll never stop playing 16-bit. And here's another reason why. Feast your eyes on the newest Sonic, a 16-bit marvel, and then simply go get one. Sonic Blast is everything you love about Sonic in a whole new light. Rendered characters bring the game to life like never before. Travellers Tales have created the best cart-Sonic since the original and breathed new life into the Genesis and Nomad.





IS THAT FMV... ON THE GENESIS??!! WHILE IT'S RATHER CHUNKY FMV, THE FACT THAT IT'S ON THE CART AT ALL IS ASTOUNDING. TRAVELLERS TALES HAVE MADE THIS FIRST NON-JAPANESE SONIC (ACTION GAME) A 16-BIT EVENT. GO BUY A NOMAD FOR THIS ONE!





























## **NEW ZONES...**

## NEW ENEMIES.. NEW VIEWPOINT... SAME HEDGEHOG!

















**DEVELOPER - BLUE SKY** 

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - 16 MEG CART.

# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



SHIDOSHI

19:52 

While new Genesis games may be a bit of an odd-ity for the enthusiast gamer (unless, of course, you think in the context of the Nomad, and con-sider them portable games), VM2's good news (actually it's great news) for game players everywhere who haven't yet made the migration to 32-bit. As with any great title, once is not enough.

133240 great title, once is not enough.

As VM2 opens, we find our green menial-labor robot pal back to working hard, enjoying a spin around the vastness of space in his trusty barge. Unfortunately, today isn't Vectorman's lucky day, and a rocket slams into the side of his ship, blowing it to bits and sending him hurdling toward an alien planet. As such, stage one (now called 'scenes,' as opposed to 'days') has you controlling Vectorman in his descent, collecting photons and blasting away at the hostile lifeforms swarming around the atmosphere. From there, you're off to explore the foreign landscape and pay a bit of sweet payback to the ill-mannered sods who used your ship as target practice. There's a nice diversity of stages here, such as an insect-infested swamp, a huge materials recycling plant, a series of underground tunnels, and even a chance to do a little robot rollerblading. Accompanying the levels are a few horus rounds to break up the action, my robot rollerblading. Accompanying the levels are a few bonus rounds to break up the action, my

favorite being one that reminds me a great deal of a faster-paced Starflight. The original Vectorman was successful, in part, because of a solid game engine, and Blue Sky gladly believes in the old say-ing, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Vectorman still animates beautifully smooth, even better than many 32-bit titles you may have played, and the classic game-play is intact. There's many an extra

weapon to find, from homing shots to a very powerful spinning laser, and Vectorman can once again morph his body into various forms. In

fact, this time he takes on the attributes of certain fallen foes.

While it doesn't look like *Vectorman 2* will have the same amount of Genesis-defying effects the first one contained (which could, of course, change by the time it's done), it should definitely prove to be a morethan-worthy sequel to the first. 16 bit lives on!



注 州后









8:44











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AVKSI



As you can see, 16-bit is far from over. Millions of gamers still own and love their 16-bitters, including us. Right now I'm going back through Castlevania on both systems, as I do with different 16-bit classics monthly, and looking forward to SF Alpha 2, Sonic Blast. DKC3. Vectorman 2, and many of the games you see here. Williams is bursting with hot titles, from classics like Ms. Pac-Man to hot ports

like *Ultimate MK3*. Sports is still burnin' too. So fire up the SNES, Genesis, Nomad, whatever and just play.

## MS. PAC-MAN

## SUPER NINTENDO

Okay, say what you will, but I am an honest fan of Ms. Pac-Man, and I ended up getting rather addicted to our Super NES preview version. It offers up four different sets of mazes (arcade, small, large, and strange), two player co-operative mode (where Mr. Pac joins the misses), and the ability to speed up Ms. Pac-Man like the converted co-op versions. This looks to be a great

purchase for any Ms. Pac-Man fan, as it adds a lot of variety to the original.





## **ULTIMATE MK3**

## Mortal Kombat has always been represented well on the SNES, and *UMK3* is no exception. True, it's not the arcade, but it's very impressive both graphically and audibly. Three modes of play are available (standard, 2-on-2, or an 8-player tournament), Rain and Noob



## SUPER NINTENDO

## WINS: 00 75 PRESS START SUB-ZERO MIGHTWOLF

are already selectable, and, of course, no load time, a definite advantage over its 32-bit cousin. I did notice that Sheeva was missing, along with a few backgrounds. But still, if you're an *MK* fan, I can't see you being disappointed.

## **ULTIMATE MK3**



tantly, every bit of the gameplay is there. Genesis *UMK3* has all the options the SNES has, and both contain Brutalities as well. Backgrounds, however, didn't make the transition well, but the Genesis version has more than the SNES version.

## SEGA GENESIS

With each new version of MK, the Genesis has a harder time keeping up, but Williams has produced another quality version. The characters are amazing for Sega's 16-bit machine, control is better than on the SNES (with a 6-button pad, that is), and most impor-



## MADDEN '97

tle players animate really well, and the field movement is crisp. Also, the rotating field during turnovers is especially smooth. The voices, of both players and referees, are excellent and clear. If you're shopping for SNES pigskin, this is the way to go.

## SUPER NINTENDO

First off, I'm impressed by the SNES version's attempt to replicate the theme music of the 32-bit versions. This version contains alltime records, something not present in the Genesis version, while it lacks the trading options of the Genesis version (there's always a trade-off...). The stubby lit-



## MADDEN '97

You'd think that developers would know the Genesis really well after 6 years. This is not the case here. Graphically, this game can't even touch Madden '92 (the best of the series), or even last year's. Why? Thankfully, there's loads of trading options, real teams and players, and an easy



## SEGA GENESIS



interface. The actual game, despite the puny graphics, plays really well. Brand new plays are available this year, and the passing windows have been dumped in favor of a cool down-field view. Still pretty good, but big brother Saturn Madden '97 stands proud and 32-bit.

## ARCADE'S GREATEST HITS

## SNES ARCADE'S GREATEST HITS GENESIS

In the midst of the coming of Nintendo's 64-bit monster, a revival of titles from the beginning of video games is taking place, which indeed is a strange twist of fate. Williams will soon give Super Nintendo owners a chance to own the same collection that the PlayStation received a while



back. Strangely missing is Bubbles, but the rest are still here, and seem to have lost nothing in the areas of graphics and sound. A nice bunch of classics, and a good way to relive the "old" days (way back, pre-1980).

the SNES version, the translations are dead on, and provide you with fond experience with arcade games (or the Atari 2600, in my case).

there is a market for such Just like compilations. memories of your first

Genesis owners won't be left out, either, Williams will be bringing out AGH for them as well. It's nice to see companies not forgetting about the many 16-bit owners still out there, and hopefully the fact that it's a classics collection is proof that





## NBA LIVE '97 **SEGA GENESIS**

AGH includes: Joust, Defender, Defender II (aka Stargate), Robotron, and Sinistar

This is an excellent B-ball game in terms of its pre-game offerings. Every team and player is available, as well as custom teams which can be equipped with players and characteristics to suit your needs. Once I entered the game though, I realized that it really hasn't come far enough in a year. During the age of 32 and 64bit, 16-bit has to be pretty darn good to get a gamer's attention. The graphics engine in NBA Live '97 is just too old, with choppy movement and screen flicker in its isometric environment. The control needs to be so much tighter, but it's manageable. A decent game, but it won't last you very long.



## **NBA HANGTIME**

## **GENESIS/SUPER NES**

Ah...this game is coming along nicely. The graph- GENESIS ics are great by Genesis standards and the control is super accurate. All the new teams and features are in Hangtime, including the "Create a Player" mode. The Genesis version seems to be heavy on 🛭 the teenage geek heads in



the creation screens for some reason. Anyway, this title should surprise quite a few people with its smoothly 



line scrolling court and great player anima-tion. The SNES version has a few more colors here and there, better voice, and a completely different selection of heads in the Create screens, but both are otherwise the same great playing arcade jam-fest.



**SEGA GENESIS** 

One last 16-bit EA Sports hockey game! I hadn't played an NHL game for almost a year, in which time 32-bit sports have basically taken over. still love the 16-bit versions though. We all know the control, gameplay, and graphics so well by now it's not funny.

This year you can trade players every which way, enter the All Star game to test your shooting and skating

skills, and play the typical array of Season Playoff games. and play mechanics The are vintage perfection, and you can jam (ha!) to some hot Genesis FM renditions of popular hockey tunes (is there such a thing?) by groups like Unlimited.







DEVELOPER - SNK

PUBLISHER - SNK

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1-2

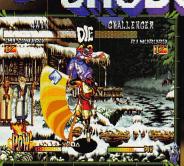
DIFFICULTY - EASY

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN













ZWIN

hen SNK announced their return to the world of third parties, I was understandably elated.
Unfortunately, I expected too much;
original titles in addition to Neo ports, and
perfect Neo ports at that. Of SNK's four 32bit releases so far, two are excellent and two are utter trash. The good ones are the exact Saturn KoF95, and the 95% perfect PlayStation version of the same game. The trash... Fatal Fury 3 for the Saturn and this game, Samurai Shodown 3 for the PlayStation.

What makes this game so bad? A number of things, worst of all its mind-numbing sluggishness. The Samurai series is a slow collection of games, each hit drawn out dramatically, but this is a joke. A three-hit fierce slash takes upwards of three seconds to connect. Even worse, the game speed changes depending on what background you're on and what character

you're fighting. The second painful trait of this game is one I have been heavily criticized on























t seems as if I've been waiting for Albert Odyssey Gaiden for years now. Actually, I probably have. Albert Odyssey Gaiden was announced for the Super Famicom in an age when Saturn was some weird new car by GM, and when people talked of "32-bit systems" they meant the Atari Panther and the NEC Tetsujin. Life moved on, but mysteriously, Albert Odyssey

Gaiden, the RPG off-shoot of Sunsoft's popular fantasy/strategy Albert Odyssey series, never materialized.

And now, some 3 years later, suddenly it appears as a Saturn game. (Well, not quite "suddenly." AOG has been languishing on the Saturn release lists for nearly a year). I can't fathom why AOG never came out on the Super Famicom, but it's pretty clear that the Saturn version is an attempt for SunSoft to cut their losses by dumping the end product of the many years of work that went into the Super Famicom version onto a Saturn CD.

Which is not to say that SunSoft hasn't spruced the game up considerably for the Saturn. The mode-7 map has been re-rendered in beautiful 32-bit color, the soundtrack is off the CD, most of the towns and dungeons have transparent layers of parallax, the battle backgrounds are now animated, some cool new spell effects were added, as well as more frames of battle animation than would have



been possible on a cartridge. But the overall effect is still just that of a spruced-up 16-bit game, albeit one that had pretty darn good graphics for 16-bit.

You play as Pike, a young orphaned boy who was saved from certain death by a community of harpies (that is to say, the rare community of kind, clean, fully-clothed, attractive harpies). One day, tragedy struck, and an attack by that world's resident evil magical army left Pike's harpy foster

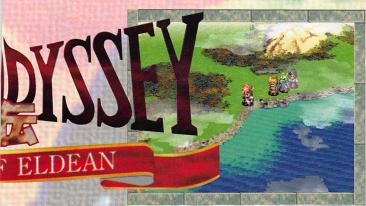












mother petrified into solid stone. Now, together with his nanny-like talking sword and a growing party of youthful companions, he's off to find a way to reverse the spell. What he doesn't know is that the evil mage behind the attack is an immortal who can only be killed by one of his own siblings... And what he also doesn't know is that his annoying talking sword happens to be that quy's sister. You can fill in the blanks from there.

A cool storyline is one thing Albert Odyssey Gaiden definitely has going for it... Too bad I'll never find out what happens at the end. Albert Odyssey is, unfortunately, one of those games that, after 5 or 10 hours of mild enjoyment, anyone without a bottomless well of patience will invariably get completely frustrated with,

and never play again. Because Albert Odyssey Gaiden is probably the slowest paced game I've ever played.

And by slow, I mean it in every sense of the word. You walk slow. The battles take forever (partially because of the excellent animation), and there are way too many of them. Worst of all, the game has horrendous loading time. Every time you get in a fight (which will be quite often), you can look forward to 6-10 seconds of staring at a black screen, pondering all of the things

you'd probably rather be doing. When the battles (most of which simply require choosing "attack" over and over) end, you get another 6-10 seconds of tedium as it reloads the overworld again. It's only a matter of time before you realize that getting through whatever blandly designed dungeon you're currently lost in isn't going to be worth the hour or two of mindless repetition it would probably require to finish. And that'll be the day that AOG goes back on the shelf, where it will gather dust for generations to come.

It's too bad, really. The Saturn could use a good RPG (or a few of 'em), and I was counting on AOG to fill that gap until Lunar and Tengai Makyo Gaiden: the 4th

Revelation finally come out. But this is just another Sword & Sorcery/Feda-caliber disappointment.



















DEVELOPER - SUNSOFT

PUBLISHER - SUNSOFT

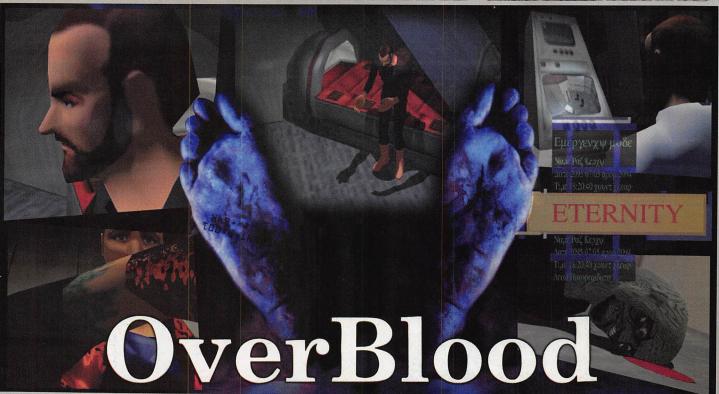
FORMAT - CD # OF PLAYERS - 1

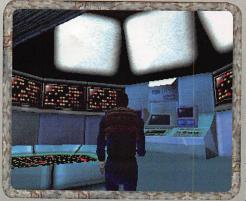
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW (JAPAN)









esident Evil has surpassed the one million copy mark internationally, and is still a top 10 seller on both sides of the Pacific. That's an incredible achievement for a totally original game, and as everyone knew they would, the rip-offs have started coming. Overblood looked to be the king of the

knock-offs, with a full real-time polygon engine and a storyline that could even outdo Capcom's classic. Could *Overblood* be a better *Resident Evil* than *Resident Evil*?

And the answer is: No. Actually, that answer's more like "HA! Right!" But I can acquit Riverhill on the charge of making Overblood a *Resident Evil* rip-off... Besides some similar storyline enemies, and zombies being the main enemies, *Overblood's* only true ancestor is Riverhill's first-run 3DO title, *Dr. Hauzer.* It's basically the same engine (but totally souped up), and it seems to be the same staff.

The storyline's a big step up from *Dr. Hauzer*, though. You play as Lars, a man who just wakes up out of cold sleep with no memory of who he is, or where. When he accesses his records in the **140** 

computer, it listed his length of time in cold sleep as "Eternity." As he explores the underground complex he's caught in, he finds only heavily rotted corpses, dead of a disease that turned them into zombies before killing them. Okay, that part's a little too close to a certain other game I've already mentioned too many times, but it does have one very cool twist: Lars is catching the disease too.

And the engine is amazing. Resident Evil just used pre-rendered bitmaps, the only polygons were on the characters... In Overblood, everything is polygons. You can see any area from any angle, and it moves and shifts with your movement. The settings are amazing, and Riverhill loves showing off by putting actual polygon objects in transparent glass casings, so you have windows in which you see different things when you look at them from different angles. A very

impressive feat.

Unfortunately, that didn't leave too many polygons for the characters. As a result, they look pretty gumpy, and there's never more than one enemy on screen at once. Actually, to be blunt, the characters look just plain awful. It's not so much that they're blocky, it's that their move-









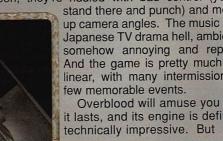


ments are completely ridiculous. I don't know how quite to describe it... It's like they motion-captured effeminate orangutan something. but, strangely, it isn't. The excellently rendered atmosphere is ruined by the game's awful camera angles, always twitching and switching at inappropriate and confusing spots, and the extreme amounts of polygon break-up in later areas. Clearly, Overblood could have used a lot of tweaking.

There are a lot of other problems with Overblood, too. The fights completely suck. Though few and far between, they're riddled with bad control (you just

stand there and punch) and messedup camera angles. The music is from Japanese TV drama hell, ambient but somehow annoying and repetitive. And the game is pretty much totally linear, with many intermissions, yet few memorable events.

Overblood will amuse you while it lasts, and its engine is definitely







DEVELOPER – RIVERHILL

PUBLISHER - RIVERHILL

FORMAT - CO

# OF PLAYERS - 1

IFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

BLE - NOW JAPAN

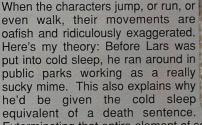








THE VENDING **MACHINES OF THE FUTURE: VEGETABLES,** CUSTARD, AND SALT. MMM.

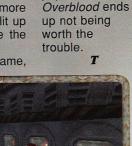


Exterminating that entire element of society is going to

be key for us to progress as a race.

Lars isn't alone in Overblood, as he first befriends a robot named Pipo, and then finds Milly, another amnesiac disease survivor. One of the game's more inspired innovations is the ability, at times, to split up the characters and have one stay behind while the other goes ahead, effectively working in concert.

Overblood sounds like it should be a good game,



despite how good it must

paper,

have looked on











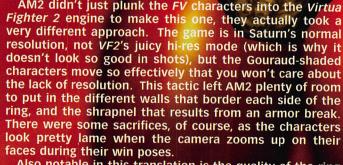


Now that I've had a lot more experience with Fighting Vipers, I'm really hard-pressed to find any fundamental problems with the game's play mechanics. First time I played it, I couldn't even stand the characters, but now I've even grown to appreciate them. Now I

understand that they're actually retarded and '80s in a cool, loveable kind of way (well, Sanman still nauseates me). Like in all fighting games, there are some incredibly cheesy moves and tactics, but even those are mostly fixed by the arranged mode. Fighting Vipers is just a great game: It feels good, it looks good, it sounds good, it plays well, and it even has plenty of balance. Most of all, though, is the way the whole experience comes together; the fusion of the perfectly

crunchy sound effects, quick, decisive character movements. grinding techno, awesome camera angles and 60 fps play control leave a satisfying taste in your mouth that puts other

fighters to shame.



Also notable in this translation is the quality of the ring itself: the floor is clear and sharp, not a pixelly mess like it was in VF2 (and just about every other 3D fighter, for that The sound effects and voices are equally matter). improved: very clear and crisp. The only major loss from the arcade is in the backgrounds. They still look good, but the planes in Tokio's stage are grounded, the shadows in













Just when he runs out of characters to choose, a chorus sings "Pepsimaaaaannnn!" and you're saved from a shameful defeat by the cool, refreshing taste of Pepsi!

And hey, the goodies don't stop there. There are three different settings for the arcade mode: Original, Arranged,



last issue, and now I realize that that was a horrible mistake. That cardboard-cutout 2D helicopter looks ridiculous: I half expect to see someone's hand holding it up with a popsicle stick. Sega nicely followed Namco's lead in their Tekken 2 translation by filling this version with tons of original Saturn options. You can play as the boss, plus 2 hidden

Honey's are non-existent, and the helicopter in Mahler's stage... well... I pleaded for Sega to put it back in

characters, two hidden costumes (for Honey/Candy), and a special "Kids" mode (a la VF Kids). The hidden Pepsiman character is especially cool... At first I was a bit uncomfortable about Sega selling out like this, but Pepsiman, with his exaggerate win poses, his special ability to "quench one's thirst," and his campy theme song, fits right in. The way he appears is beyond awesome: It only happens when you're playing against the computer and are about to lose (and lose badly). Suddenly: "Challenger comes." The game goes back to the character select screen, and the phantom 2P cursor slowly scrolls through the characters.







and Hyper. Arranged mode fixes a lot of the inequities in the game by tweaking the dam age of cheesy moves, making certain moves (like jump attacks when your opponent is down) harder to use, and tossing each character a couple of new moves. Hyper mode is the same as Arranged, but when you break off your armor (which is now a simple Back + Punch + Kick motion), you're in hyper mode for the rest of the round, and move nearly twice as fast. Your moves don't do much damage, and you're very weak to attack, but you can do crazy chains and juggling combos.

I'm way over my word count here, so I'll cut right to the chase: this is a great game, and you must buy it. We're reviewing this as an import title for now because of the fear that Sega might censor the armor break moves and delete Pepsiman, so you'll have to stay tuned next month to find out about that. But no matter what SOA does, it's a safe bet that the final version is going to be the arcade translation this Christmas. T









# GINERON SCIENTIFICATION OF THE PORT OF THE

Yeah, I saw the whole thing. The beast cometh, charging, fierce. Intention: Send one head into one... orbit. Seldon, big, bad, ready... scared! Wife, uh, kids, uh... FIVE MILLION DOLLARS! Which way to the canvas? A grazing blow that wouldn't have knocked my girlfriend down... face plant! Crowd, booing... Not convincing enough. I'll wait for one that'll look good on camera. Oooh here it comes, DIVE, DIVE! Wha.. it didn't hit me, FIVE MILLION DOLLARS. Stay down, go home. Count money. Fact: there's no one left for Mike. Evander, you're a cool cat. Don't do it!! Mike should be fighting like, bears and rhinos, or three guys at a time or something. This is the greatest fighter there's ever been.

Mike's like a wind up toy, crank spun to maximum tension. I don't care what your strategy is, MIke's goin' through it; at you. You can't run. He'll catch you. Capcom should make the game, should it ever happen. The heavyweight division however, is now a one man show.

"CHIP"

As my first taste of N64 sports, I can only imagine what the future holds. Gretzky will appeal to fans of NBA Jam and Open Ice almost instantly, with too-fun play that picks up right away and holds you there for hours on end. I love the speed bursts, flaming pucks, and brutal hits. The fully 3D rendered rink is 64-bit perfection.

"STRAP"

GCPM092 9 9 0 8 9 92

The awesome presentation is only half the goods. The actual game plays so well, with so much consistency, that all other football games up to this point can only bow and acknowledge Madden's superiority. Ultrasmooth graphics, perfect sounds, and the best play-mechanics ever... here's your champion.

GCPM098 9 9 10 8 m

3D Baseball isn't the most spectacular hardball I've seen this year, but it is one of the most playable. I had a great time with the basic play mechanics and solid control, despite the fairly basic visual presentation. The full MLBPA support is always nice to see, and the season options are a required plus.

GCPM081

Besides the great 3D and powerful unlimited perspective camera system, GameBreaker is a fantastic package of college football options and plays. The play control is right on, with a superb feel for running and passing plays, and the comprehensive 400+plays list is a joy to use. The little bonuses, like college bands playing marching tunes and personalized stadiums round out one of this year's most impressive football games.

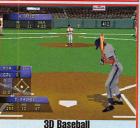
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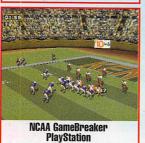
Wayne Gretzky's 3D Hockey Nintendo 64 Williams



Madden '97 SATURN Electronic Arts



3D Baseball PlayStation Crystal Dynamics



Wayne Gretzky's 3D Hockey is an easy game to describe... it's hot arcade style hockey! The N64 is going to be a phenomenal sports machine. Although stats may suffer (they eat up valuable cart space) seeing the players up close with no pixellization has been long in coming. The analog pad takes some getting used to, but full 360-degree movement is worth your time. I won't call this the ultimate hockey game as it's only the first but I will highly recommend it!

G C P M O 90 8 9 7 5 7 90

It had to happen sooner or later, and it has. EA's back on top with their latest in the Madden series. Madden '97 for either platform is the season in your living room. Remember the ease of execution from the Genesis days? Well, it's back but with graphics from above, supreme multi-player games, 8 cameras and comedic commentary from the man on the train. See it, buy it, play it, love it!

GCPM095 9 10 10 8 18

Crystal has delivered as promised a hot polygonal game of baseball. As the season winds to an end here's a reason to stay in the game. An easy (but not lame) control scheme along with effective cameras, smooth fielding and clean CG highlights greet you at the door and never look back. The game balance is also user friendly. Pitching first need not cause a panic.

GCPM080 8 9 8 5 m

If you want more stats and realistic college football action, buy a ticket. With 400 plays at your disposal, unlimited cameras and smooth responsive running, passing and defensive gameplay, well, you can't ask for a whole lot more. But there is more. Sony's GameDay engine is at work here, and we all know what that means. Try to imagine that godly game with more depth and crazy college plays. It's a hummer!

G C P M O 90 9 8 9 7 m

# GameFan Sports Preview

Chip

#### tegmo super bowl

The football game that started it all is back and ready to do some serious business. Tecmo Super Bowl looks absolutely fantastic. As good as it is, can it actually get better? Nearly every 32-bit football game we review is a gem. It's confusing, you know? Tecmo Super Bowl, however, is the first great looking un-conventional FB game, which makes it a prime candidate to really stick out. It almost looks like your watching TV. Scary. We'll have a full report on Tecmo's first 32-bit series addition next month.





Jacques Strap





















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ROLLING THUNDER

THRILLS YOU,

WAIT TILL IT'S IN YOUR LIVING ROOM.



For the PlayStation™ Game Console

NASCAR<sub>®</sub> Racing for the PC was the biggest racing game ever. Now it's available for the PlayStation™ Game Console.



Change tires, gears, suspension, and more to customize your car's performance in Sim mode.

- · Totally realistic car physics
- Customizable Simulation Mode or hop-in and-start-driving Arcade Mode
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- · Night racing on 3 tracks
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- Also available on PC and Macintosh



In car view puts you in the driver's seat. Rear view lets you see the big picture.



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DEVELOPER - ATARI GAMES **PUBLISHER - WILLIAMS** 

FORMAT - 64 MEG CART

# OF PLAYERS - 1-4

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

**AVAILABLE - OCTOBER** 



JACQUES STRAP WHEE, LOOKIT ME! A CANUCK WIT' A PUCK!

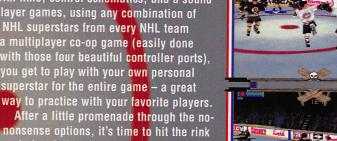
f you enjoyed Midway's Open Ice coin-op, Wayne Gretzky's 3D Hockey should be right up your hip-checkin' alley. Get ready for wild hits, speed bursts, flaming pucks, and fiendishly addictive multiplayer action. As a die-hard sports fan hailing from the north, I've played hockey (you know... with Wayne and Garth), been to countless games, and spent countless hours playing each, and every console game. Now that I've qualified myself... on with the review!

What sets Gretzky apart from the rest of the pack is the total arcade feel. Sure, you can set it on Simulation, where injuries are taken into account (as well as penalties), but I get the impression *Gretzky* was never designed to cater to sim<mark>ul</mark>ation fans. Once you whet your palate with a full-blown game in the Arcade mode, Simulation will be the furthest thing from your mind. Personally, I wouldn't have it any other way. I can satiate my sim cravings with countless other hockey games. Gretzky offers a perfect NBA Jam-on-ice feel that keeps you coming back for more.

Load up the game (or should I say turn on the game...cartridge power!) and after a digitized static of good of number 99, you'll be offered many welldefined options. If you're playing against a buddy, do yourself a favor and pump up the difficulty 'cause on easy your goaltenders are brainless wimps. Other than difficulty, you can tinker with time, control schematics, and a sound test. Gretzky supports up to 5-on-5 player games, using any combination of real players or CPU, and offers three NHL superstars from every NHL team (Open Ice, anyone?). If you start up a multiplayer co-op game (easily done

with those four beautiful controller ports). you get to play with your <mark>own</mark> personal superstar for the entire game - a great

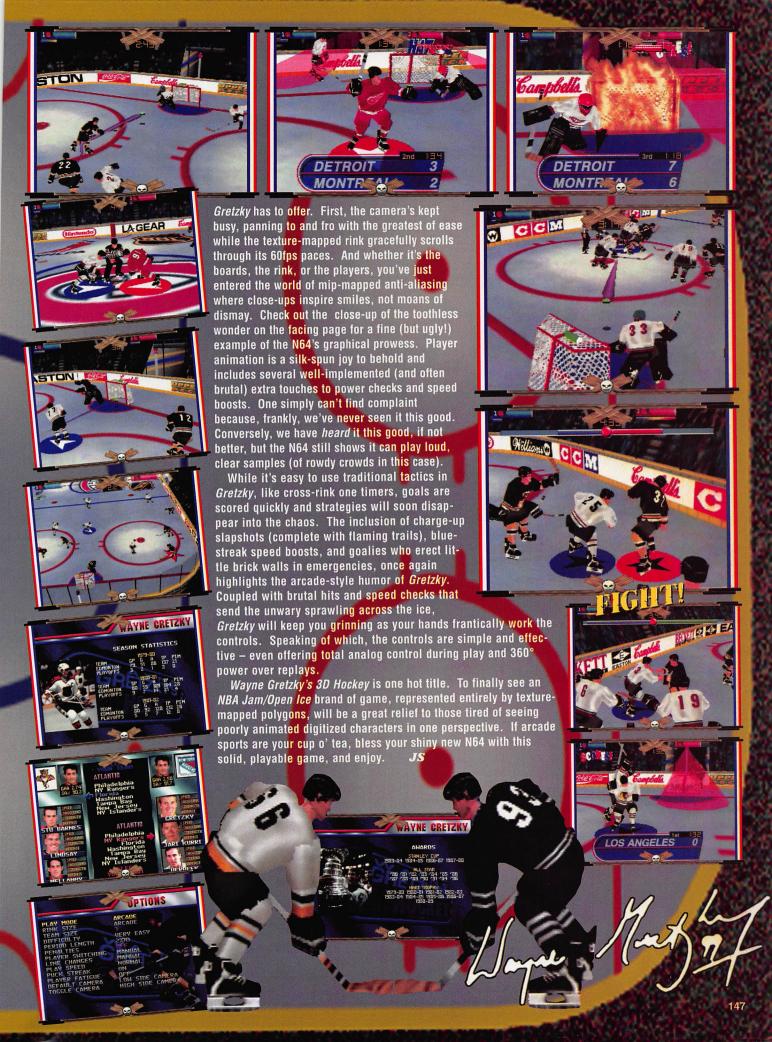
nonsense options, it's time to hit the rink and absorb the mass of N64 perks that





do for you!









SEGA SATURN



JACQUES STRAP









ife is good! I'm looking at both Madden '97 finals! Last month, the GF Sports team stayed up late with our alpha versions, so you can imagine the reaction to a couple of "final code"

Madden disks sliding through the doors.

As I've mentioned before, EA had experienced some problems with Madden '97, on one occasion scrapping the whole pro-

iect and starting from scratch. As these fantastic versions are about to hit the street though, I'm happy to say that all is forgiven.

This year's installment of Madden takes its typical cross-platform trip, yielding the inevitable comparisons we've all come to expect. Much as the Genesis and SNES Maddens of the past raised questions regarding hardware strengths and weaknesses, so to do the

Saturn and PlayStation versions. First, though, I'll tackle the play mechanics, an aspect of Madden '97 which goes virtually unchanged

between systems.
I'm looking at one of the most complete and user-friendly football packages in the history of sport games. For starters, the help menu is truly a gift from pigskin heaven. At virtually any point in the game, you may click on the menu to be given a full explanation of any set of options, controls, or play settings currently running on screen. This includes information about any command – even telling you what con-

troller buttons to press while accessing or closing menus.



After watching a first time Madden player (where ya been?!) swiftly

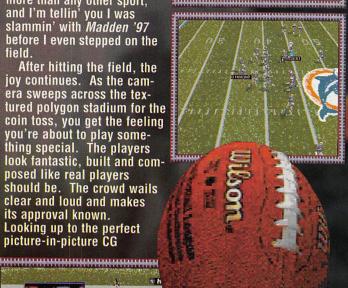
make his way through the many options without a hitch, my beliefs were well founded. ease of execution is fine and dandy, yes, but I was blasted outta

my seat by the sheer range of options. 100% NFL? You bet. Every NFL team and player, loads of all-time best teams (psst, there's even more if you win the Super Bowl), and every sin-

gle real-life team stadium in the league. Throw in an eight player multi-player mode, every weather condition under (or not under!) the sun, full record keeping, and I am one happy sports freak. I play football games

more than any other sport, and I'm tellin' you I was slammin' with *Madden '97* before I even stepped on the field.

After hitting the field, the joy continues. As the camera sweeps across the textured polygon stadium for the coin toss, you get the feeling you're about to play some-thing special. The players look fantastic, built and composed like real players should be. The crowd wails clear and loud and makes its approval known. Looking up to the perfect picture-in-picture CG













LIONS

CAPTAIN CALL

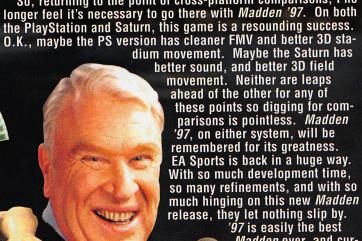
square, the coin drops in. The camera pans and the entire field scrolls into view, fast and smooth. The players line up; the crowd explodes with an anxiousness you can almost feel. The classic kick meter peaks, and as the ball sails towards the receivers, the realization slams into you like a Junior Seau sack: This is the Madden we all remember. The cool plays, the perfect control, the end zone showboating, and Madden quotes that you gotta laugh at ("Hit 'em in the back of the head, they blow snot bubbles!"). The passing windows have graduated to 32-bit, with a full down-field view of your

receivers, clear and fair, so that any passing error can only be the fault of the player. The running is much more realistic now – you won't be dashing for 50+ yards of tacklers. The player animation (runs, passes, tackles, etc.) is superb, packed with little extra touches that make plays exciting and memorable. Finally, witness the endzone dances and prepare to be amazed. They are smooth beyond belief, include the most recent of jigs (back-flips, toe drags, crowd calls, etc.) and humiliate your friends convincingly

in multi-player games. So, returning to the point of cross-platform comparisons, I no longer feel it's necessary to go there with *Madden '97*. On both

> Madden ever, and cur-rently the best football game available.







Wilson



**JACQUES STRAP Snot Bubbles?!** 

# IOHN MADDEN



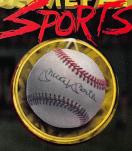














BASEBAL



**REVIEW** 



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - CRYSTAL DYN.

PUBLISHER - CRYSTAL DYN.

FORMAT - CD

# OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE – SEPTEMBER

he regular season is almost over. '96 has been a good year for baseball (comparatively speaking), and I can't wait to see the battles for the divisions and championship this fall. The year's early season flood, and year-end explosion of baseball games has yielded some very impressive titles. As the bombshell of Sega's World Series 2 touches down, Crystal Dynamics sneaks in with 3D Baseball, their big sports release for '96.

As I've mentioned in past previews, 3D Baseball contains all of the players in the Majors thanks to a full MLBPA license. I feel like I've said this a million times before, but once again expect to see all your favorite players and their digitized mugs popping up during games. All the important stats are included, with progressive stat tracking for season play. There are no major league teams in 3D Baseball, everything else is here, but no actual teams. Ain't licensing strange? How do you get the players and not the teams? Oh well. On with the review.

3D Baseball isn't everything it was hyped to be, but it comes close. It's a very, very fun title. If you remember, earlier this year, Crystal Dynamics was busy touting their 3D engine, "real motion control," and although I expected something truly revolutionary I am not disappointed. You'll be hard-pressed to find better player animation in any baseball game. Whether it's the real-life nuances incorporated into the batter's moves, the silk-spun fluidity of the pitcher, or the throws and tags of the fielders, the animation in 3D Baseball is hot. The great animation doesn't trip up the control either, which is dead on and easy to get accustomed to. Unlike Konami's Bottom of the 9th, Crystal isn't trying to throw you off with wacky new play mechanics (like aiming a cursor to hit the ball... I still think it's weird, O.K.?). Instead, we have the tried-and-true gameplay we're all used to: swing, pitch, runs, steals, dives, traps and jumps



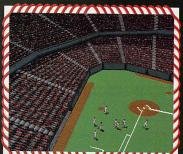












in the outfield (with the kind of control we're all used to). The 3D scrolling of the field is good, and the stadium pans and zooms with only the slightest of break up, close-up. Van Earl is perhaps the finest commentator ever in a baseball video game, with excellent pronunciation of player names and very good play calling. Although the overall sound quality during a game isn't up to par with, let's say, Bottom of the 9th, the character of Van Earl's voice-over adds greatly to the feel of the game

say, Bottom of the 9th, the character of Van Earl's voice-over adds greatly to the feel of the game.

While 3DBB might not claim the overall diamond ball crown this year, rest assured that it's an incredibly fun game with just the right touches spread about evenly. While others might criticize 3D Baseball for fairly tame graphics, and perhaps the lack of the MLB license, I've truly enjoyed this baseball game and would recommend it to any fan.

The one notable shortcoming is the poor selection of stadiums. These four ballparks, complete with fictitious names like the "Crystal Yards," aren't really good enough to fill the void of 22 missing parks. But luckily, 3D Baseball is saved by the ease of execution in its menus and play set-up screens, which are simple yet flawless. Companies are finally getting wise to the fact that players want their sports games to be meaty, but without complex options to slow 'em down.



# SOCCER SO AUTHENTIC WE SHOULD PROBABLY CALL IT FOOTBALL.



The most realistic graphics and gameplay of any sports game ever.

Sega Worldwide Soccer '97.

Forty-eight national teams from around the globe.

Cup tournaments, shoot-outs, and exhibition matches.

Create-a-player and weather options.

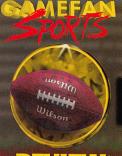
Headers, back-heel passes, banana and bicycle kicks. Killer slide tackles, and plenty of refs to yellow card ya.













NY INTERACTIVE

OF PLAYERS - 1-8

FFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

ALLABLE - NOVEMBER



**JACQUES STRAP** 





his year's most in depth football game is here. Sony's NCAA GameBreaker is a great package, loaded with options, fantastic plays, and devastating realism. Not only have the designers maintained the quality 3D engine and gameplay of their first game, GameDay, but they've gone further by compiling countless historically accurate College football features.

I'll give you a quick run-down of the major options: All 111 college teams, stadiums, and real-life college uniforms are here. Complete statistical tracking of over a dozen offensive and defensive categories can be viewed and saved. There's exhibition, season (with or without bowl games), playoff tournaments, and national championship modes. Citrus, Gator, and Rose Bowl games are represented, as well as Trophies like the Jim Thorpe and Heisman. There's four difficulty levels, game speed adjustments (set on Very Fast, the game rockets through plays at amazing speeds), and snow, wind, or rain game weather options. Basically, Sony has college football covered completely.

O.K., so you get the picture - options GALORE! Let's hit the field, and

take the gameplay apart. Choose from custom Offensive and Defensive formations like the "Full House," "Flexbone" and the "4-4," from over 400 total plays. Your offensive running and passing game offers spins, hurdles, stiff arms, and diving catches. These moves are accurate down to the pixel so if you shake two defenders with a spin, but slow up, expect to be hauled down mercilessly by the third and fourth. If you happen to











press hounds) will actually be levelled, just like the real thing. Other cool animations, like forearm shivers, shoestring tackles, and over-end power hits, help to convey the brutal nature of football. When I had possession, I was using the handy unlimited perspective Camera system to get the ideal view when attempting tough running and passing plays. Similarly, on defense, this great camera system was perfect for covering tough 2nd SNNGUNCER ON down passing situations. I could spot the receivers running their routes, and (hope-

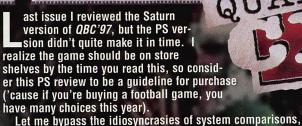
fully) intercept them. The computer Al is tough, though, on any setting, surprising me with its quick learning and dogged determination (the CPU, for once, will try to sneak by 4th-down punt fakes and 2 point conversions). Every component of the on-field action is perfect, with pinpoint play control, excellent animation.

> user-friendly play-calling, and effortless camera angles. GameBreaker's texture-mapped polygonal engine is fast and efficient, rendering the 3D stadiums smoothly with little break-up. The added touch of having 12 real college fighting scores, orchestrated by the actual school bands, makes one realize how historically correct this game actually is. NCAA GameBreaker is the most dedicated and entertaining college football game ever. Madden '97 may retain the overall pigskin crown, but in terms of college-based football games, you'll find none

better than NCAA GameBreaker.







and tell you that the PS version has the superior 3D scrolling (and, obviously, cleaner FMV). Otherwise, Saturn and PlayStation owners won't have a thing to brag about, 'cause it's the same game (one heck of a game, in fact). Iguana always does their homework when crafting a QBC game. Have no fear — official teams, logos, jerseys (complete with real-life numbers), and players are here. The Jaguars, Panthers, Ravens, and new Rams, are included with up-to-the-minute rosters. We actually saw the game go through statistical and player changes between

each new rev, as off-season trades and roster changes happened in real-life! Talk about details! *QBC'97* tackles the options with Exhibition, Playoff, and Season modes, player trading, and the basic goodies like weather, stadium, and player selection. I'm a little

disappointed that a mere four stadiums are selectable, but the addition of home team banners and paint make it almost un-noticeable.

The PS version supports up to 8 players simultaneously (four less than the Saturn's), and has no trouble handling the gridiron bedlam of multiplayer games.

The graphics in *QBC'97* are inspired to say the Speaking of graphics, last month I remarked there were no noticeable improvements made for '97. After going back to '96's QBC and actually comparing, however, I feel like a total bonehead. '97's graphics are much improved. You're sure to find a smoothly scrolling perspective with the virtually unlimited Cam system, and the pans during kick-offs are a slick piece of work. The players are traditional sprites with great animation... I especially like the

little touches like shoestring tackles and realistic scoops to recover balls after hard tackles. I get the impression these designers are either football fanatics or did extensive research. Either way, the end result is realistic

gameplay that you'll not tire of watching again and again. Quarterback Club '97 is among the top three PS football games this year. Madden is still the king in my book with QBC'97 a close second, and GameBreaker third. The new NFL GameDay should be showing up soon, as well as Sega's new football... My, my, we're being treated well this year! This is an excellent game in any case, and I highly recommend it.

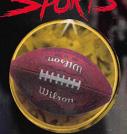




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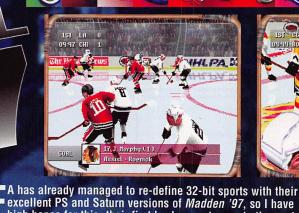


JACQUES STRAP SACK ME! C'MON, TAKE YER BEST SHOT! HUT! HUT! HUT!

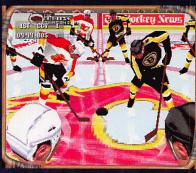


LI DX ORISES SERVE





high hopes for this, their first hockey venture onto the next





C ARTS



Beginning with the Play Modes, EA has included Exhibition, Season, Shootout, and Playoff choices. The Season mode naturally offers memory card use to save all of the team and league stats as you fight your way to Lord Stanley's prize. Other season options include the ability to monitor player stats, simulate a game (once chosen, it will simply go back to the Season screen, acting as if

gen consoles.

the game had been played), and enter the Transactions mode. This Transaction mode allows you to trade players, release and/or sign players and free agents, and Create Players. Give your ice skatin' mauler a name, jersey number, choose his weight, and make him a righty or a lefty. From here you are given almost a dozen characteristics, which all start with a rating of 40. You're allowed over 150 points to spread about on each characteristic (which ultimately gives the player a rating of 100). The cool thing is, if, for example, you're creating a goalie, adding a lot of noints to his Buck Control and Stick/Clove coving will yield a his because. adding a lot of points to his Puck Control and Stick/Glove saving will yield a higher overall rating 'cause those are the characteristics he needs. After all this creating, simply save your player into the Create Player file, stick him on a team, and you're ready to play. This is perhaps the coolest (and most user-friendly) feature to ever grace a hockey

NHL '97 employs a real-time, texture-mapped, polygonal engine. The crowd, ice, boards, rink, and players, have all graduated from two-dimensional bit-maps to a full-fledged 3D package. Currently, the frame rate needs a little work, but when one considers the sheer number of sprites moving on screen this point is forgivable. There's loads of camera angles to use, from Classic Cam or Press Box, to Isometric and even Helmet Cam.

So far NHL '97 is looking, sounding, and playing pretty good. All the NHL-related goodies are included, as well as bonuses like the Create Player feature that help to make this a well-rounded simulation. The new season is upon us, so bring on the hockey! I'll review NHL '97 next issue.

**JACOUES STRAP LET THE HOCKEY BEGIN!** 



WELCOME TO



















le eat a lot of Pasta... that's how we win so consistently" Oh, and I tell my son, "if you don't let me win I won't tell you how to defuse the bomb under your seat... that helps". Of course, those aren't actual Andretti quotes, but this is the real Andretti game. One that they per-

sonally over saw. entire Besides the Andretti racing clan (Mario, Michael, and Jeff), EA has acquired the rights to many other well-known drivers, so you're getting an accurate portrayal of the racing categories represented. From both the Stock and Indy car circuits, climb behind the wheel and become a legend. Jeff Bodine, Chip Lange, they're all in here. After deciding which circuit to race, you can adjust laps (3, 8, or 12), check out records, or enter the Car set-up

menu to tinker with Transmission, Tires, Front/Rear Wings, and Gear Ratios. While cycling through the options, high-quality FMV racing footage plays on screen, a finely produced piece of software is at hand.

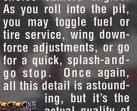
Climb into the driver's seat, and the level of detail just keeps flowin'. Stunning degrees of accuracy have been incorporated into *Andretti* Racing, highlighted by the real-time dynamics of drafting. Physics and steering ratios have also been seamlessly melded into the driving and tracks, where you'll feel the car being coaxed into a corner if you haven't accelerated at the ideal secchoice camera angles.

actual quality of the racing environment that makes racing in Andretti so enjoyable. On all 20 real-life tracks, that's 10 in each circuit, the textures are rich. there's very little

the cityscape of Toronto or beaches o f Oceanside International) Good, tight, realistic control compliments the whole

Andretti Racing rates high in all areas. The graphics while not completely blister-

ing move at 30 fps, so they look great in motion, good techno and fantastic screeching sound effects help to keep you dialed in on every lap, and there's more than enough sheer racing action even a Link-up mode – to keep racing fanatics busy for a good long time. Until Psygnosis hits with F1, Andretti Racing leads the pack. JS



clipping, and the scenery is true to the track's location (i.e.,

package.

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - STORM FRONT

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

VAILABLE – NOW



CHIP VIVA ITALIA!







ond in a chicane or S-turn. There's three racing views (behind, above, and inside the car), an informative map (labeling lead cars in differing shades), and a picture-in-picture offering aerial view, rear view, and a leader car cam. The pause menu includes race stats, engine/music kill switch, and replays using 7







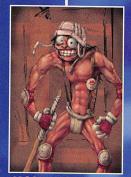






PER - ELECTRONIC ARTS

VIC ARTS



**JACQUES STRAP** I just got hit with somebody's wood!



# PGA TOUR 97





he PGA Tour series has been well-respected throughout the years, providing a realistic golfing simulation, with the PGA license and stars, across almost every PC and home console. The annual trend continues this year with PGA Tour '97 for the PlayStation.

Releasing a PGA Tour game often seems to be predicated by the bulk of

options included in the package, and this year is no different. The short, high quality, FMV introduction leads into quick start options. These include an instant tee-off, game modes and course selection. A quick look at the game modes reveals your play choices: 18 stroke, 18 skins, 18 hole tournament, and shoot-out/practice modes. The practice mode offers you a nice opportunity to refine your play before entering the main game and the pressure of competition. You may choose your golfer from among eight amateurs (six male, two female), and up to fourteen pros (including such tour veterans as Fuzzy Zoeller, Tom Kite, and Davis Love III). Choosing an amateur allows you to name your golfer and adjust your selection of clubs prior to playing, adding a muchneeded personal touch to an otherwise straightforward settings menu. Finally, choose between two true-to-life courses: TPC at Sawgrass and The Links at Spanish Bay.

As I hit the links, I became slightly distraught with the level (or lack thereof) of detail. Short of transforming this review into a rant touting the virtues of 32-bit in sports games, it must simply be said that PGA Tour '97 won't be amazing golfers with its visuals. Course fly-bys consist of a short, unimpressive, FMV clip. I hoped beyond hope to finally see real-time, controllable fly-bys, resplendent with texture-mapped polygon glory, and instead I'm cursed with this low quality FMV dud. The in-game graphics are also mired by lackluster quality, trapped in a state of regression with courses constructed of still frames, and years-old digitization of the golfers. I understand, however, that real-life players are accurately represented through digitization, but the desperately over-used still picture courses, are a tired foray into 16-bit (an age and technique I prayed we'd seen the last of).

In the past, I felt confident with the annual appearance of PGA Tour, trusting in EA Sports to upgrade as required with the changing trends of technology. PGA Tour '97 is still a perfectly agreeable game in the realm of gameplay, with the standard swing controls, grid-mapped greens, and picture-in-picture sub-screens detailing shots. Sadly though, nothing

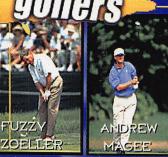
is new, revolutionary, or, most importantly, 32-bit. I'm afraid PGA Tour '97 will find itself bested by other golf games in the near future, games that will contain the graphical appeal deserved of a next-generation platform. PGA Tour '97 simply lacks the elements critical to today's 32-bit sports gamers. Yeah, it plays fine, but staying inspired enough to warrant play after play will be a stretch for anyone.

















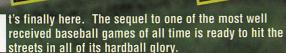












This year, it's a perfect package from top to bottom. From the fantastic FMV opening, you're led into a no-nonsense set-up menu. Play an exhibition game against anyone in any real-life MLB stadium, or start a season or pennant race. Set-up the innings, errors, difficulty, commentator, and hit the field. Take a little time to ace your swing in the Homerun Derby or battle the best in the All Star Game. Yeah, I know, these are just trademark WS features, but ain't it great? Add the MLB and MLBPA licenses, all names, every single stadium (measured in exacting proportions), and true-to-life season play... Gentlemen, I think we've got ourselves a winner here.

As usual, the play mechanics are right on. Much like 3D Baseball (elsewhere in GF Sports), WSB2 is still relying on old-style play mechanics to drive its gameplay. Let me define this so-called "old style" (which seems to be my coin phrase for the issue): Control methods which have been used in the past with great success, and haven't been tampered with for newness' sake. One button to bat, with timing as the skill tester. One button to pitch, with the D-pad as your natural guide for curves and arcs. Two buttons for running and sliding, and two buttons to slide, jump, or trap into a catch. That's the way I've been doing it for years, and that's the way I like it. Luckily, the quality of control (the response, accuracy, etc.) in WSB2 is also fantastic.

The graphics, for the most part, haven't seen any drastic changes. The 3D scrolling has been cleaned up; swooping stadium pans are now smoother, and player scaling and animation is markedly improved. The sound is still brilliant, with a perfect baseball-sounding commentator, and great stadium/crowd effects.

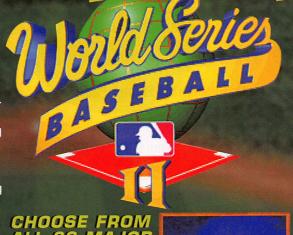
My faith in SegaSports remains at an all time high. Sega never forgets sport gamers, and how much we value the quality of the simulation and the ease of gameplay. Worldwide Soccer '96 is an absolute gem, and Sega's football is almost ready (yes!). World Series Baseball 2 nets the hall rolling first, though, and it sets a precedent for all others to beat. Hands down, this is the finest base-

ball game this year. JS













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SEGA SATURN

EVELOPER -

# OF PLAYERS - 1-2

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**JACQUES STRAP** MORE HOT HARDBALL **ACTION FROM SEGA!** 





# WE TOOK THE LATEST BATCH OF GOODIES SENT US HERE AT GF AND DID THE ONLY THING WE COULD... RATED 'EM!



Name: Specialized Fighter Pad

Company: AsciiWare **System: Super NES** 

Features: Auto/Manual Turbo, Slo-Mo

This controller was made for SNES owners longing for a pad better suited for fighting games. One of our Killer Instinct strategy guide editors was amazed at how well it worked for KI. The Dpad's a bit small, but performs perfectly. Super NES fight fans preparing for Alpha 2 may want to check this pad out. It performs equally well with every SNES game.



Name: Super Advantage Company: AsciiWare **System: Super NES** 

Features: Auto/Manual Turbo (adj. speed), Slo-Mo (adj. speed)

The most noticeable thing about this joystick is its only flaw; an awkward button layout. The L and R buttons should be placed to form a standard 6-button configuration. As configured, the joystick takes some getting used to for fighting games. It is, however, a superb product otherwise.



Name: Rhino Pad

**Company: Ascii Entertainment** 

**System: Super NES** 

Features: Auto/Manual Turbo, Slo-Mo

A solid, well-built controller that doesn't offer much in the way of options. Taking it through the paces in several different action games, we found it to be a suitable alternative to the standard SNES pad. It fits comfortably in your hands, and the D-pad is responsive and reliable.



Name: Ascii Saturn Stick Company: AsciiWare System: Saturn **Features: None** 

After just one playtest with SF Alpha 2, we all knew this was a high-quality product. It's designed for arcade players, and features a true arcade style joystick, as opposed to a bulky sphere. We were divided on this one. Those who didn't like it thought the stick required very deliberate motions, and that the buttons weren't "springy" enough. Those who liked it mentioned its weight and feel.



Name: Specialized Control Pad

Company: AsciiWare System: PlayStation

Features: Auto/Manual

Turbo (adj. speed), Slo-Mō

The best alternative if you aren't into the stock PS pad design. Springy buttons, ultra comfort, and a clicky D-pad make it hot for platformers, drivers, and just about anything else. We've been pounding one for almost a year now and it's as good as new.



Name: Specialized Joystick

Company: AsciiWare System: PlayStation

Features: Auto/Manual

Turbo (adj. speed), Slo-Mō

Tested on SF Alpha, we find this stick to be a solid, extremely high quality product. It does takes some getting used to if you're used to a pad. Normal moves come out perfect, but supers take some doing, due to the stick's short rotation radius. The button configuration is perfect for fighting games. This is the best PS joystick currently available.



Name: Fighting Stick SN/SG-6

Company: AsciiWare

System: Super NES/Genesis Features: Auto/Manual Turbo

(adj. speed), Slo-Mo



The Fighting Stick SN and SG-6 (which are the exact same joystick, one for each 16-bitter) were very similar in design and feel to the Saturn Eclipse Stick. It's different aesthetically, but still suffers from a small, cramped construction. Despite this, the stick offers good control, and the buttons have a better overall feel. It's designed for fighting games, but also works well for action/arcade games. A good purchase if you can overcome its size, which certain editors actually preferred.







Mad Catz has three hot items I'd recommend to anyone. Their PS pad's the perfect alternative if vou don't like the boomerang shape of the Ascii. It's one of the most responsive pads around, although things do go flat after a few hundred hours of constant pounding.

Their steering wheel, the only true analog one around, the Per4mer, is a lovely device complete with pedals! Just pull up the fan and it's like the real thing! If your unfortunate enough to have experienced Sega's wheel o' misfortune, this one will really blow you away.

Mad Catz multi-tap, (I've had one hooked up for a year) works well, although the buttons tend to loosen a bit over time. They still work though, and it offers five connections!

Interact's Arcade Shark for the N64. The stick can be removed and screwed into either the digital pad on the left side of the base, or into the analog pad in the center of the base. Look for a complete playtest in upcoming issues.

Interact's Flight Force Pro 64 will undoubtedly be the ultimate stick for games like Pilotwings. Considering the number of features the stick offers, it should be a popular alternative to the stock '64 pad. The revolutionary Programmable View Control might change the way you see Nintendo 64 games. Built-in memory is another big plus. Our coverage of this ground-breaking product will continue.

Mad Catz Advanced controller for the Nintendo 64, er, uh, doesn't look all that advanced. 'Cept for the lil' ridges and black paint I don't see like, high technology at work. But you never know. It does include their floating directional pad. It must be what's inside. We'll try one out and get back to you.







You've seen the adverts everywhere and are probably wondering what the big deal is about Samsung's GXTV, the first personal video game monitor made especially for gamers. I've had one for five weeks and can say without a doubt, it is the finest small TV one can buy. The 21-watt 3 speaker surround sound has deep, meaty bass, the remote and on-screen options are a gamer's dream come true, easily adjusted to fit each and every game, and it looks incredibly cool no matter where you put it. It also swivels so I can show the other Ed's my superior abilities with the greatest of ease. When you're

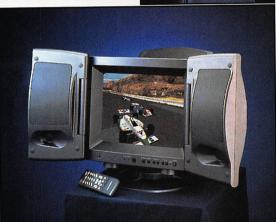
Plug in up to three consoles plus 2 standard RFs!

done playing, fold in the doors and keep the dust and muck off your screen. Don't worry about closing them during a paused game either, the speakers are magnetically shielded. The GXTV is a steal at just \$349.99. The only thing my GXTV does not have that I desperately want is a SuperVHS input. Samsung has assured us that it will be available in future models. Larger sized GXTV's are on the way as well. It's high time some-

> one made us a TV! By the way, regular shows come to life

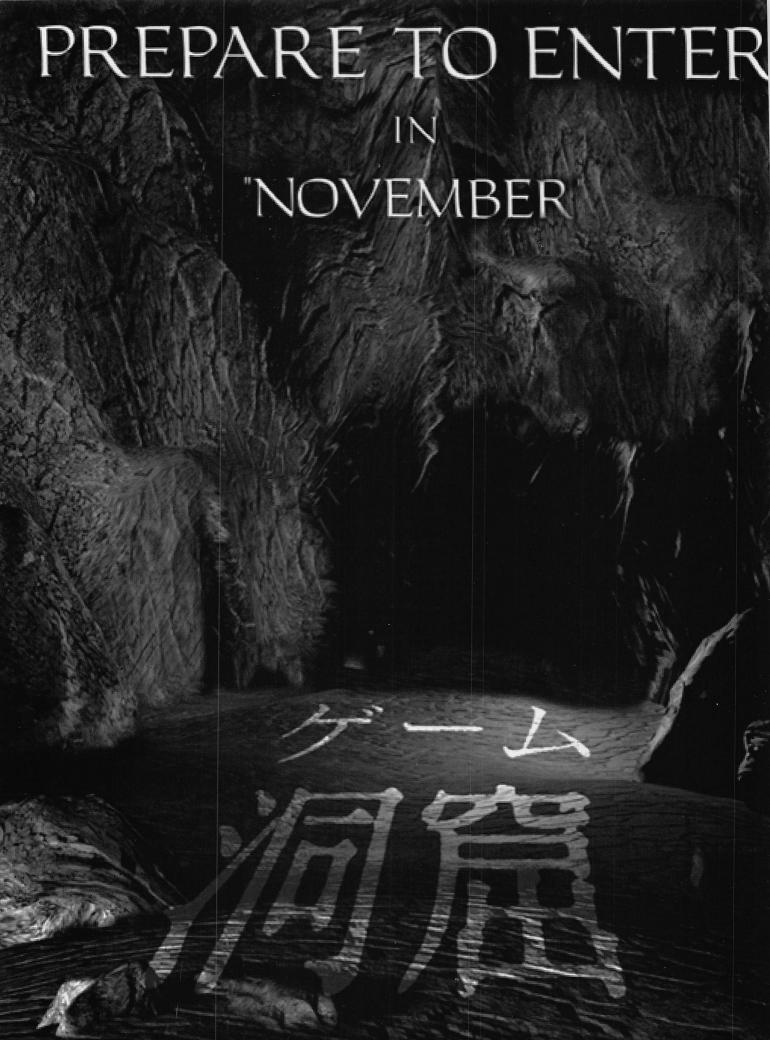


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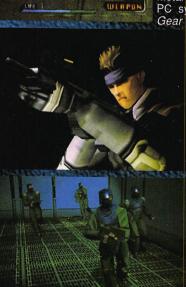
# **Metal Gear Returns on the PlayStation!**

Hideo Kojima, the head of Konami's computer entertainment division, is one of the most revered game designers in all of Japan. He writes, produces and plans each of his games, and the phenomenal success of recent title like *Snatcher* and *Policenauts* has made Mr. Kojima a household name. Konami actually began advertising this game last month, with no information except its initials and the name of

its creator. But now the title has finally been announced: Mr. Kojima is making a 32-bit, 3D version of the first game he ever made, *Metal Gear*.

All of Mr. Kojima's previous games were made originally for various Japanese computer formats (even Metal Gear came out for Japan's MSX PC system before the NES). Metal Gear Solid is his team's first title

designed exclusively for a home system, in this case, the PlayStation. The game sounds similar to Bio Hazard, but is based directly on the events in Metal Gear, and its sequel, Solid Snake. Hero Solid Snake must avoid traps, try not to be spotted by enemies, and make his way through a fortress to find and destroy Metal Gear. Like Resident Evil, the game will have predetermined camera angles (which you cannot control) for maximum impact, but unlike *Resident Evil*, the camera will not be fixed in place, and will zoom in, out, and pan alongside you for maximum effect. Another programming innovation will ensure detailed-looking characters from any camera angle: each character will have 3 or 4 differ-



Metal Gear Solid. The bottom picture is an image render; not from the actual game.

ent models that the computer will seamlessly switch between as the character gets closer or further away. This way the game can have many low-polygon characters visible when the camera is zoomed out, but still have high-polygon detail when the camera is zoomed in. The camera will also change to conform to your various weapons, for example, the camera will zoom far out when you have a sniper rifle, but leave you without much range of vision when you're wielding a knife.

Metal Gear is but a small part of the Universe Mr. Kojima's team created, in which all their games are subtly interconnected. Their two most recent titles have ben two well-received digital comics: Snatcher (which featured a helpful, benevolent Metal Gear) and Policenauts (which shares one major character, Meril, with the Metal Gear series). So as not to disappoint fans of those two titles, Kojima has promised that Metal Gear Solid will have all the tension and drama featured in those games, but with a far heavier emphasis on action.

### **Actraiser Confirmed for Saturn**

We actually reported this rumor nearly a year ago, and now it's official: Sega of Japan has announced the release of the first Saturn title created by Quintet, *Act Remix*. Quintet, who previously worked exclusively for Enix, is the team behind such Super Famicom titles as *Actraiser I & II*, *Slapstick*, *Soulblazer*, *Illusion of Gaia* and *Tenchi Sozo*. Although Enix may own the titles, Quintet evidently owns the content, and are thus able to make *Actraiser* on the Saturn with a slightly changed name. (The name, *Act Remix*, is still tentative)

Act Remix will feature levels from Actraiser I & II, redone to take advantage of the Saturn's advanced capabilities. It will also mark the return of the simulation mode that was featured in Actraiser I, but sorely missed in the sequel. The game will also feature new magics, voice in the conversation scenes, and a number of other surprises, such as a rumored one-on-one fighting mode.

Sega of Japan expects to release Act Remix within the year, at a price of 6800 yen (around \$65).

## Ridge Racer... 3?

December 3rd looks like it will be Ridge Racer Day for a third year in a row (in Japan), as Namco's newest racing title is proceeding smoothly and nearly ready for a year-end release. The only thing it seems to still be missing is... a name.

ing is... a name.

The tentative title has changed from New Ridge Racer to New Race Game, reflecting the major deviations from the previous Ridge Racers present in this title. New features this time include a Grand Prix Mode in which you must race a number of races to get the money necessary to buy the better cars you'll need to win. There are many more variations in the cars in this one, too... Everything from VW bugs to stock cars

bugs to stock cars.

The game's 5 (?) courses are all new, and are seemingly all inspired by famous locations in Europe. Among the objects in the scenery are the Arc d'Triomphe and Athenian ruins, to name a few.

There are a few major play mechanics changes as well. Gear shifting will be much more important this time around, to the extent that there will be hills you just won't be able to get up without downshifting. The terrain will also be much more severe in terms of hills and mountains. All new soundtrees





hills and mountains. All new soundtrack, too... I can almost taste it.

# Warp Announces Newest Saturn Project: "Real Sound"

Odd even by Warp's standards, *Real Sound* (tentative title) will be the first game ever to feature no graphics. Nothing. Nada. Zero. Okay, maybe a title screen. But the entire content of the game's two CDs will be voice, sound and music effects, with the gamer interacting via 3 or 4 controller buttons.

In Japan, where radio dramas are very popular among game-playing aged youths (many radio dramas, such as *Twinbee* and *Popful Mail* are based on video games), the idea doesn't sound quite so weird. But a

game in which absolutely nothing appears on the screen would take a lot of getting used to for anyone.

The storyline, written by E0's Takamatsu Ogawa has not yet been announced, but the themes will be "fear," a popular one down at Warp, and a new one, "love." The game will feature some sort of 3D sound engine, Q-Sound, or Y-Sound, or something new... Mr. Ino has not decided yet. The Japanese release date has not been announced yet, and an American release is so far out of the question that it's not even funny. Of course, I doubt too many people are going to be losing sleep over that.

**Gumpei Yokoi Leaves Nintendo** 

On August 15th, Gumpei Yokoi, Chief of Nintendo's R&D 2 division, resigned from Nintendo of Japan. Although most famous for developing the GameBoy, Mr. Yokoi is also the man behind the invention of battery back-up cartridges, Nintendo's pre-Famicom Game & Watch duos, and many other hardware innovations. His game production credits include two Nintendo classics: Metroid and Kid Icarus.

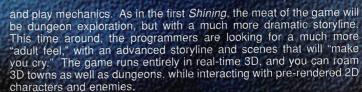
Although no reason has been offered for Mr. Yokoi's sudden resignation, speculation has centered on the failure of his most recent creation, Nintendo's Virtual Boy. That failure would seem due more to a lack of software support than design however. Either way Gumpei, we'll miss you. Best of luck.

New Shining Game for Saturn!

Back before they shattered into 3 different companies. Climax amazed Genesis owners with their debut title, Shining in the Darkness. A hand-drawn dungeon RPG with great graphics and depth, a sequel was long rumored to be coming, but Climax instead turned to the Shining Force series. Now, Sonic Software Planning, the Climax fragment responsible for *Shining Wisdom*, has announced their second Saturn title, *Shining and the Holy Ark*.

Holy Ark isn't really a sequel to Shining in the Darkness (nor to Shining Wisdom, for that matter), but is very similar in terms of style

Shining the Holy Ark



SSP has also done away with pesky random battles, and instead the game's 90+ different types of enemies enemies will each be roaming the dungeons with you, or oozing from cracks in the ceiling as you pass. Battles seem to be traditional RPG style, but you'll be able to see your characters as they fight. Sounds hot, and it could be available as soon as December '96!

## Nintendo of Japan Announces Next Space World

Famicom Space World '96, Nintendo's annual event consisting of the press-only Ishinkai (formerly the Shoshinkai) and two days of public admission, has been announced for November 22 (press only), 23, and 24th. It will take place at the Makuhari Mezzanine in Chiba (outside of Tokyo), Japan.

The Nintendo 64 debuted at last year's Shoshinkai, and people have speculated Nintendo will unveil their 64DD ("Bulky Drive") at this one. Nintendo is coy on that topic, though, and has officially announced only

The list of 3rd parties who will be participating has also been released. Neither Namco nor Square, two companies who have long been rumored to be rejoining Nintendo's team, will be showing products, a bad sign for Nintendo fans. But Capcom will have a booth... Does this mean they're developing N64 titles, or simply showing a last Super Famicom or GameBoy title or two? We'll have to wait 'til November to see.





# First Look at Resident Evil 2

At the Tokyo Game Show, Capcom unveiled a 3 minute tape of the sequel to their PlayStation million-selling masterpiece, Resident Evil (Bio Hazard in Japan). The game features the same basic engine as the original, but with more of everything that made Resident Evil great.

The storyline directly follows the first. After the surviving members of the Alpha team

landed back in Raccoon City, an investigation of the Umbrella corporation began. They were found to have been developing and illegally testing biological weapons, and many Umbrella employees were arrested. All biological weapons

activity was seemingly halted.

But two months after the original biohazard incident, Raccoon City itself came under attack by an army

of zombies. The people the zombies attacked became zombies as well, and in no time Raccoon was transformed into a city of death.

There were apparently only two survivors: Raccoon Police Department rookie Leon S. Kennedy (age 23), and Raccoon University student and motorcycle racer Elza Walker (age 19). The game begins in the Raccoon Police Department, where Leon finds himself surrounded by his former colleagues, now zombies (but still wearing police uniforms). Cold but strong-hearted Elza enters the picture when she rams

her bike through the police station's front door.

It's there in the police station where Resident Evil 2 begins. The first thing you'll notice is the number of enemies on screen: 6 police-uniformed zombies come at Leon at once, an amount that would not have been possible in the original Resident Evil. The second obvious change is the "costume change system." The characters in part 2 change in appearance to reflect the clothing and armor they're wearing (each character can find a number of jackets and such, and one picture shows Elza wearing a hot-looking wetsuit-like outfit), as well as their health status. As you get attacked, your

clothes get torn and wounds add up on your character's actual textures! Even cooler, your clothes get stained with the splattered blood of your victims... So be careful when you pick off a zombie at point blank range, you might end up wearing him for hours afterwards.

Resident Evil 2 is on target for a March release in Japan, commemorating the original's one year anniversary, and the American release should be within a month or so of that.





New heroes Elza Walker and

# Japan's Most Talented Developers Join Forces to Publish Own Products

Small game developers frequently receive little credit but lots of restrictions from the publishing companies they work for. In Japan, that's all changed, with the recent birth of GD Net. Now the developers who have long slaved behind the

scenes, creating such gaming master-pieces as Lunar, Actraiser, Treasure Hunter G. Guardian Heroes, Chaos Seed and Tengai Makyo II, will be able to publish their products under their own labels with complete freedom.

Nine of Japan's most talented game developers have joined together to form GD Net (Game Designers' Network), and established a new company to publish their products, ESP (Entertainment Software Publishing). Conceived by Game Arts, probably GD Net's largest member, and with venture capitol from CSK, the two companies recruited a dream team of development companies who had previously worked for such prestigious companies as Sega, Square, Enix, and Hudson, to

"In order to make a good game, I feel it's necessary to have an environment in which it's easy to make good software." explained Yohichi, Miyaji, president of Game Arts and the newly formed ESP. The new company will loan money to the GD Net members, publish products under its members' own labels, handle advertising and marketing, but will NOT interfere in the development of any products. "There are positive aspects to large companies," Mr. Miyaji pointed out. "They have broad human resources networks, and can easily hire people. And of course, they have financial power. I tried to think of a way to incorporate all of the good elements of large companies... while preserving the independence of the individual companies. You could say that GD Net is a mutual assistance group, like a farm collective." (quotes from 9/6/96 Saturn Fan)

The participating companies are:

name a few

Game Arts (previously developed for Sega)

Game Arts has made such masterpieces as Lunar 1 and 2, Silpheed, and GunGriffon for Sega. They also took this opportunity to announce a number of new titles, including their next major RPG, Grandia. This title (actually by the GunGriffon team) is a 3D RPG that has been in

development for 3-1/2 years, and seems to easily put similar efforts like Dark Savior and Breath of Fire 3 to shame. The game is being made by a staff of over 150 people, including a soundtrack by the movie soundtrack producers at Skywalker Sound, and the CG designer that did GunGriffon's amazing intro.

A Saturn translation of Lunar Eternal Blue that will be handled in-house (not by Kadokawa Shoten, who translated Lunar 1) will follow, and will feature remixed music, new animation, redone battle graphics, and six dungeons that were cut from the original. Finally, Lunar Magic School, a two disc Saturn remake of the Game Gear's more child-oriented Lunar Walking School. More on all of three of these

Grandia, and its hero. Justin.

next month!



Quintet (previously developed for Enix)

Without a doubt one of the industry's most acclaimed developers, Quintet was responsible for such Enix classics as the Actraiser series, and the Soulblazer/Illusion of Gaia/Tenchi Sozo series. They are currently making a version of Actraiser for Sega, and are about to begin work on their first EPS game, a racing game of sorts.

Treasure (previously developed for Sega)

Treasure has made such cult masterpieces as Gunstar Heroes and

Dynamite Headdy for the Genesis/MegaDrive, and Guardian Heroes for the Saturn. They are currently at work on Silhouette Mirage, a 2D sidescrolling action-shooting game for the The game takes place in a world that is being split in two... One a world of silhouettes, and the other a world of mirages. Only Shina Nera Shina, pictured here, can travel between these two worlds. The game is only about 2% done.



Sting (previously developed for Square)

Sting has only made one game to my knowledge, a recent Super Famicom masterpiece called *Treasure Hunter G*. Although Sting does claim to be working on another *Treasure Hunter G*-like RPG, their first EPS title is Baroque, a 1st-person RPG in a cyberpunkish setting, due out on the Saturn next year.

**Neverland Company** (previously developed for Taito)

Neverland is currently converting their cult Super Famicom hit, *Chaos Seed*. for the Saturn. They are also starting work on their next project, Steamship Pirates, an original Saturn RPG.

**CSK General Research** (previously developed for various companies)
One of the founding members of GD Net, this long time Sega developer's
most recent project was developing the first Saturn *Gundam* game. CSK's two development teams are about to begin a new RPG, and has plans to work with Bandai again in the future.

Nihon Art Media (previously developed for various companies) Famous in Japan for developing the Alesa series of RPGs, Nihon Art Media is currently finishing up *Lunar: Silver Star Story*, which they were contracted to do by Kadokawa Shoten, who licensed it from Game Arts. They have yet to begin any original EPS projects, but are thinking about doing a strategy/RPG title, as well as a new Alesa game.

**Bits Laboratory** (previously developed for various companies) Bits laboratory has 10 years of experience in the industry, and claims to have developed for every system except for the Nintendo 64 and Game Gear (most of their titles have been conversions of games to other systems, such as Darius and After Burner II to the PC Engine). They currently have a number of Saturn projects in the works, including at least one strategy title.

Alpha System (previously developed for various companies) Alpha System can boast to be the developers of the first home CD-ROM game ever... Did you guess it? Yep, Fighting Street for the PC-Engine/TurboGrafx. They also handled the programming of PC Engine masterpiece *Tengai Makyo II*, also for Hudson. They have yet to announce any new EPS projects.

As you can see, these are some of the industry's most impressive developers. We heartily look forward to seeing the first games they produce under the new freedom and opportunity available to them as members of GD Net. Oh, and just because seemingly every game announced as an EPS release is for the Saturn doesn't mean these companies aren't be free to develop on any platform they wish. Just a

big coincidence, I suppose. Lunar 2 (left) and Lunar Magic







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# -UP-TO-THE-SECOND JAPAN NOW AM SHOW UPDATE!

The biggest surprise at the 37th AM Show in Makuhari, Japan, has got to be the poor showing from the two forces that had previously dominated Japanese arcades, Sega and Namco. Of course, Sega had the game of the show with Virtua Fighter 2, but that had been on test in Sega arcades all over the country for weeks, and came out nationwide on September 14th, so that was hardly news to anyone. The only new VF3 display was in the form of an awesome, never-before-seen promotional CG video for VF3 that was beyond amazing in terms of CG quality... Other than that, both Sega and Namco dished up nearly the exact same game twice in a row, first with Namco's Alpine Racer 2 and Sega's Scan only be discerned with very sophisticated instruments. Same story with Namco's ski games whose differences and Sega's which not only share fundamental similarities with each other, but Nintendo's *Wave Race 64* as well. I'd have to give the edge in that race to *Aqua Jet...* System 22 just looks better than Model 2. Namco's other "hot" title was **Dancing Eyes**, a puzzle game where you play as little monkeys, zipping around popping chunks off of vases, doors, or simple clothes that are encasing attractive CG women, with semi-soft porn results. Whoopie.

A lot of the action was at Konami's booth. The big attraction was a demo of their as-yet-unnamed 3D fighting game, running on the powerful Cobra hardware they co-developed with IBM. It looks pretty good, but Sega's Model 3 is still the benchmark in that area. I don't know what hardware link-up racing game (GT/C) is running on, but it's capable of giving anything a run for its money. This driving title takes place in an entire town, and you can go zipping through the side streets and make your own shortcuts. The world is amazing: From the top of the hilly city you can see everything, and you can even run your car through sidewalk cafes, sending people, umbrellas and tables flying. The detail has to be seen to be believed! Furthermore, GTI Club has more new ideas than the last 20-or-so racing games combined; a bomb-setting battle mode, for example, as well as the introduction of a hand brake for helping you make those hairpin turns. The hand brake is awesome, the tension and squeal are just perfect. Finally, Konami had

, the 40% done but not-so-hot-looking 3D version of Gradius.

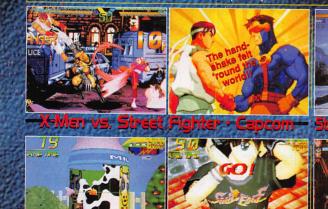
Capcom was rocking as always, with a 15 second clip of Street Fighter III (look for many shots in Other Stuff) buried among a WarZard (Red Earth)'s and X-Men vs. Street Fighter's. Lovely games indeed, but they should be out by the time you read the WarZard (Red Earth)'s and X-Men vs. Street Fighter's. Lovely games indeed, but mey should be this, and I shan't expend my valuable column inches here. Street Fighter EX is well worth a note, though. This long awaited 3D Street Fighter title is by Arika, the start-up headed by Street Fighter creator Akira Nishitani. Running on PlayStation hardware, its look may be that of a heavily light-sourced Tekken, but the play is vintage Street Fighter (Two new twists: Throws are done with Jab and Short, Guard Breaks with Fierce and Roundhouse). Ryu, Ken, Chun Li and Zangief are back, based on their Street Fighter Alpha 2 incarnations, and there are four new characters: whip-and-knife-toting Doctine Dark, costumed freak Skullomania, hard-kicking female Pullum Pruna, and a young Japanese lady named Hokuto. Two other spots in the selection screen are blank... Whether they'll be filled with new or old characters is yet to be seen.

Taito offered gamers three more opportunities to "Catch the Heart" (their slogan), although only one was particularly notable. Their generic PlayStation-hardware fighting game, Fighters Impact, looked okay, and racing title Side By Side was

notable. Their generic PlayStation-hardware fighting game, **Fighters Impact**, looked okay, and racing title **Side By Side** was something you definitely didn't want to do with one of Sega or Namco's racers. But **G Darius**, a new PlayStation-hardware based chapter of the *Darius* saga, looked incredible. The gameplay is still vintage 2D shooting, but backgrounds and bosses are rendered in 3D with great impact. Only a tape was shown, but I'm already waiting for some of that programming and

development talent that shined through in Ray Storm.

There was one interesting 3rd party ST-V (Saturn hardware) title: Raizing's 3D overhead shooter **Sokyu Gurentar**, which looks incredibly slick. Atlus' ST-V 2D fighter, **Groove on Fight**, was pretty sad, though... Horrible use of color. And last (but not least) is SNK. Though the 64-bit hardware was NOT shown ("maybe next show"), SNK's still squeezing the last out of the Neo. Samurai Spirits: Amakusa Kohrin (Surely to be out of the Neo. Samurai Spirits: Amakusa Kohrin (Surely to be **Samural Shodown 4** here) uses the same game system as SS3, as well as a lot of the animation. Charlotte, Jubei, and Tam Tam made the cut this time, and two new characters have joined. The backgrounds scroll up and down as well as left and right, and they now go to the sudden death versions on any round, not just Found 3.If The life barslare a dot longer (thank God!) and every character has new Treachery/Chivalry versions. Less exciting was SNK's sense was a sense of the life barslare a dot longer. (thank God!) and every character has new Treachery/Chivalry versions. Less exciting was SNK's sense was a sense of the longer of the lo other versions of Bomberman). This is but a hastily assembled preview (Takuhi stepped off the plane with scant hours to spare before the issue closed) and we'll hopefully have a more comprehensive show report next month.





















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Super condensed last second...



Nintendo released the Pocket GameBoy in Japan this past July, and within the first week, sold over 800,000 units! Nintendo issued no press release, however, as they didn't want their Nintendo 64 launch to lose any steam. The GameBoy, go figure. I just bought the mini... who can resist? In other news, shots of Yoshi's Island 64, F-Zero 64, StarFox 64 and Zelda 64DD will reportedly not be released until a week prior to the Shoshinkai game show this November in Japan. Zelda 64 will be Nintendo's main focus on the show floor. Sources at NCL hint that a 50% demo of Zelda, much like the 1995 Shoshinkai Super Mario 64 demo, will be displayed for all to see and play. Enix will be showcasing their first 64DD game, Dragon Quest VII. No report as to how complete the game is or even if it will be

playable; it will, however, be there. Rare will show some video footage of the highly anticipated first 64-bit *Donkey Kong*, *DKC64* for the 64DD along with an unknown, second 3-D action game.

Star Wars Shadows of the Empire is rumored to have not one, but SIX planned sequels. Ka-ching! Yes, you've read correctly, the next three could be remakes of their old counterparts from the Super Nintendo.

GAMEFAN CONTEST WINNERS



he grand prize winner of the GameFan KI2 contest is: Michael Valenzuela Los Angeles, CA enjoy that hot coin-op!

James Keefe Benton, ME Have fun James! Our congratulations to these lucky lads!

#### KONAMI RESURPECTS OF POWER

We thought we'd lost it forever when it dropped out of sight earlier this year, but here it is back in our midst. Castlevania for the PlayStation! These shots arrived just in the nick of time for your 2D hand drawn viewing pleasure. We'll have a full report on the storyline and new characters next month. The date is set for December Japan, February U.S.









# SHOCKING X-MEN VS. STREET FIGHTER UNLEASHED!









While tens of thousands of on-line gamers continue to overload our web site to view our *Street Fighter III* shots, GameFan magazine (under strict instructions from Capcom HQ) have decided to postpone our exclusive *SF III* pictures until Capcom feels the time is right. Instead, here are some super-quality shots of another awesome arcade fighter; *X-Men Vs. Street Fighter.* Just as soon as Capcom give us the word, we'll reveal the entire *SF III* cast to you, but in the mean time... here's a whole host of familiar faces engaged in the most spectacular fist fest ever seen!

During our visit to Capcom, we were able to play an almost complete version of XMVSF, and found the play mechanics to be very similar to X-Men: Children of the Atom. Initially, there's 17 characters to choose from (eight X-people and nine world warriors), all of whom have moves that launch opponents high into the air, cool combo attacks and an assortment of power attacks. Ryu and Ken have air fireballs, Bison has a new fireball which can begin combos, but the big news is you select two players and can switch between them during combat! What's even more cool is that with a correct motion (and a full power meter), both of your fighters can launch a joint attack (check out the Charlie/Bison combo on this page)! Want to know more? Then watch for our coverage next issue!



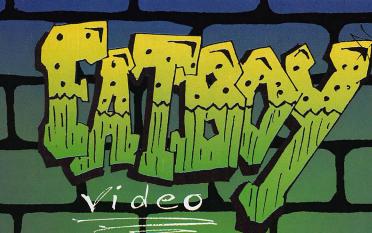








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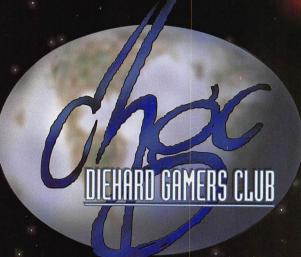
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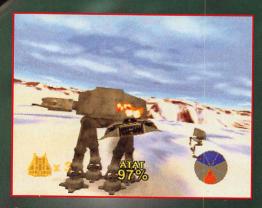
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#### Dear Postmeister,

Here's my top ten reasons why getting my August GameFan eight days before the end of August is a good thing:

10 - At the first of the month everything is so hectic, what with all of my other game magazines showing up at my doorstep on time, plus all the games that still need to be played, GameFan's monthly late arrival really helps to give me a much-needed break.

9 - The day to day to day... waiting for my GameFan to arrive.

8 - What would the subscription department do with themselves if they didn't have me to pester them several times a month?

7 - Because I know, when it finally arrives, it will have something that none of the other game magazines have. Oh look, another ten page spread on *Super Mario 64*. (Boy, never saw that one coming.)

6 - I've always had a terrible time coming up with ways to entertain myself during the last eight days of the month.

5 - At least I know when I look at the mail order ads and they tell me that a particular game will be "available in August" I know for certain it's available!

4 - Did I mention the waiting part?

3 - By the time I get my GameFan I have completely forgotten everything I read in my other game magazines so it's like reading all about these game for the very first time. NO REALLY! IT IS!!

2 - The fact that I can now prove to my landlord that something does indeed arrive later than my monthly rent check.

And the number one reason why getting my August GameFan eight days before the end of August is a good thing:

1 - Current info? Who needs current info? I just subscribe to GameFan for the pictures!
Sorry guys, I couldn't resist. I really do love your 'zine, I'd just love it if it could get to my house a little earlier each month. No hard feelings, I hope.

J. Greg Evans Salt Lake City, UT

#### Dear Greg,

Every editor at GameFan is as mad as you are. We labor weeks on end and work around the clock like zombies towards the close of each issue making GameFan the best we possibly can. When we hear all of that is in vain because our subscribers are getting the mag way late, it makes our blood boil. This problem is due to a delicate blend of errors from what's called a fulfillment house. Unfortunately, adjustments made in the publishing industry are not instant, and you can't pull away from such a place immediately. Loose ends like subs coming in, previous mailers, cancellations (I wonder why), billings, etc., take a while to sew up. The transition is complete now however, and our new service has assured us the problem is

solved. Subscribers will begin receiving their issues before the stands (except for certain specialty retailers who get it UPS delivered), from now on. Subscribing to GameFan is no longer an exercise in pain. Oh, by the way, everyone did Mario to death. We have to, it's-a Mario!

#### Dear Postmeister,

First of all, I believe that this letter deserves to be printed. Why? Cause it's probably the only freak'n letter in your whole mailbag that's concerned with the future of the Virtual Boy! It's as if everyone, including Nintendo, forgot that the system exists! Yes, I'm a semi-proud (and mighty worried) owner of the VB and I have some questions for ya.

1. How hard would it be to port SNES games over to the VB (besides lowering the color palette)? Just imagine... F-Zero, Pilotwings, Super Mario Kart... all in 3D!

2. How are the polygon capabilities of the VB compared to the FX and SVP chips? This could confirm the possibilities of FX portovers to the VB like StarFox, Stunt Race FX (Stunt Race VB?), Doom, and possibly even FX Fighter and Comanche!

3. Is Rare a developer for the VB? I wanna see *KI3D*!

4. Where are the Nintendo games? Virtual Mario Bros? Zelda VB? Virtual Metroid? Kirby's Virtual Land? (Of course, I just made those up, but still...)

5. Could you drag someone away from Super Mario 64 and NiGHTS for a sec and have him review Bound High and Dragon Hopper for me? Please?

6. The voice of GameFan is a loud one. If I scream loud enough in your magazine (not literally, of course), do you think Nintendo and its third parties would hear (and consider) my plea?

Thanks for your time.

James P. Mincey

#### Dear James,

We to are perplexed and somewhat disgusted over Nintendo's treatment of this great hardware. It's as if, because a million didn't fly off the shelves, they abandoned it without even giving it a chance. I could see if they had released a ton of hot software like a Zelda, StarFox, Metroid, Killer, or Stunt Trax, and then, if it still didn't sell, taking drastic measures, but killing it without even trying was even worse than the 32X fiasco. To make mat-ters worse the whole mess cost 'em Gumpei Yokoi, one of the Nintendo elite! How could they let this happen? It's a shame he'll never get to enjoy just how hot a machine he designed. This situation also kills it for any other such innovative 3D devices that may have been in production. Rare was designing VB games but I believe they've stopped. I doubt you'll see anything from them. To answer your question about ports, well, you couldn't really port a SNES game on to the VB, however, a game already designed, drawn, balanced, and scored (these constituting most of the initial work that goes into development) could be converted easily, cost effectively and quickly. Actually some of the Virtual Boy game designs that got cancelled are being converted to other 32-bit consoles as we speak. I have two VBs,

one at home and one here in my little cave they call an office. I play it all the time and really dig it. If you must have games, contact your local video game import store and have 'em order you Space Squash from Japan. It's a hot. one-on-one, 3D action game. I honestly believe that had Nintendo properly publicized the VB (we never got a grabbing VB to take screen shots or even 1 preview ROM) it would have really taken off. We offered to make a bimonthly VB magazine, no strings attached in exchange for nothing more than a system to capture with, and were even looking into making the pages appear 3D, but Nintendo never responded. They just killed it. We'll review what looks to be the last two games, Dragon-Hopper and Bound High, as soon as they're released. Hold on to your VB. There were two games displayed at the last two shows, a hot racer and an underwater Ecco-like adventure that never surfaced, there's also a ton of games on the "unknown list" in Japan. You never know...

#### Dear Postmeister,

I guess I make about the fifth female gamer to write to GameFan. I've been playing video games since I was five, when I got my Nintendo for Christmas. Ten wonderful years with Nintendo, and I'm finally making the switch to Saturn this Christmas. My main reason: no more SQUARE, no more RPGs. Well, anyways, on with the questions!

1. Postmeister, what's with the German?! I can't understand a darn thing you're saying,

even after a year of German!

2. Takuhi, I just heard a rumor that the *Lunar* remixes are being delayed because 1 and 2 are going to be packaged together and they and *Lunar 3* are all going to come out at the same time. Hope it's true!

3. By the way, do you guys know anything about a Lunar anime? How about Final Fantasy? Any way to order them, as they're my two favorite RPGs (Lunar for the humor, Final Fantasy for the seriousness)?

4. Moonies of the world, unite! We Sailor Moon fans aren't violent. Well, sometimes... My best friend and I are like the only people in our school that really like Sailor Moon. We plan on dressing up like Scouts and going to a Con. It's a bummer that no one's interested in the game. It looks mega-cool! Is the Japanese RPG any good?

5. No offense to anyone that likes polygons or anything, but Tetsuya Nomura's art work sucks! I can't believe they made Yoshitaka Amano do backgrounds! His artwork is gorgeous! The man is a genius! Did anyone ever see the box artwork for Vampire Hunter D? Does anyone know where I can get a poster of that?

6. Is Nintendo planning on having any RPGs for the N64?

7. I agree with Alison Cappellieri. Female gamers are only now being recognized as actually liking video games. I think the pen pal column is a great idea. Probably work really well on the Internet. Don't despair Allison, you can always buy a Sailor Moon import!

8. Does anyone one know what Lunar 3 is going to be about? I hear everyone's going to save the Blue Star. Are they going to clear up anything in the remixes? 9. This is more of an opinion than a question.
Nintendo's such a pain in the butt! They never
bring anything good over here, then I end up
buying the import!

10. I love all your guys' Japanese game coverage. I love to know what's going on over there.

11. Takuhi has a great anime section and extremely good taste in anime. It's the first thing I turn to in the magazine. Please keep it around.

You guys definitely have the best gaming magazine in the industry. Never lose your quality and humor!

Ciao, Nicole Kirk New Port Richey, FL

Dear Nicole.

The recent trend (well, it's a mini-trend, at least) of female gamers and anime fans writing us is being immensely enjoyed by the entire staff. Your point of view and opinions are deeply appreciated. It gives us hope that someday we'll find love with someone that can play us in Street Fighter. The German, oh, the German, was meant as a joke, Postmeister... meister. A friend of mine (I have some), Evil Lights, who's taking German, was down visiting and we thought it would be funny. DH told us he thought it was a dumb idea but he's the type that lets you sink yourself and then just sits back and watches you squirm. It was just a bunch of one-liners praising Mario. Now I'm getting letters from Germans about pronunciation... As for Lunar 1 & 2 being packed together, you can forget that one. Lunar 3 is on the drawing board but don't expect it until well in to next year, Japan time. GameArts is busy working on Grandia, their newest Saturn RPG, Lunar 2, and a mahjong game. Lunar Silver Star Story for the Saturn is the original Lunar with completely redrawn graphics, 2 new main characters, an enhanced story and all new music. There's also 45 minutes of hot animation you won't believe (which is the closest you'll get to a Lunar anime). It comes out in Japan this October. Lunar 2 (Eternal Blue) is being done by GameArts (Silver Star Story is being done by Kadokawa Shoten) and features enhanced, (but not as much as Silver Star's) graphics and little else. It will be out (in Japan) before Christmas. I'm sure Working Designs is making preparations to bring them all out here as soon as humanly possible now that RayEarth is nearly finished. RayEarth, by the way, is an event in Saturn Action/RPGs. The graphics, gameplay, story and especially the music are all amazing. I just hope the US voice is good.

There is one four-volume Final Fantasy anime, available in Japan. It takes place 1000 years after FF5 and has music by Nobuo Uematsu... and chocobos! Manga should jump on this one. Nintendo RPGs include Zelda, and uh, Zelda. I'm sure however, there will be many... in Japan. RPGs on the N64 will surely be glorious. And finally, if you and your friend must dress up in Sailor Moon gear, why not snap a photo and become immortalized in the pages of GameFan? Be sure to scream "Venus love and beauty shock!" The Sailor Moon RPG on the Super Famicom by the way, is a hurtin' experience. I'll work on the poster...

Dear Postmeister, I need the information please. I don't get it. Send me the information. Jaime Hernandez, Covina CA (I swear that's an actual letter. -Ed.)

Dear Jaime,

Agent Beelzabub-09A! It is good to hear from you. You have not shown at any of our contact points for several weeks. Also, do not use your real name in public correspondence such as this. The information you seek can be found at 46 Rue des Fontaines, in Nice, south France. There you will meet a little old lady, who will take you to her family's "bakery." In the back room you'll find the microfiche. After retrieving the information, IMMEDIATELY EAT THE FILM. We trust you can complete the mission with efficiency. Remember, the fate of the entire Corporation now rests on your shoulders.

Dear Postmeister,

Hey there! It's Jen again. I'm glad to hear that Wolfinger's Wall is coming back; I've missed it sorely. As for being part of a "cult" that the majority of the vid-game world didn't know existed? Well, in a way, I do have to admit you're right; female fighting game fans are definitely a mere microbe of the gaming population (unfortunately). That might explain the funny looks I get in the arcade. It's rather annoying when you're trying to play Alpha 2 and someone's looking at you like you're missing some major part of anatomy or something. Well, that's their problem. Anyhow, I've got a couple of questions I'm hoping you can answer; I'll be eternally grateful!

1. Is there, or will there be a Totoro video game? I've just recently seen the movie and grew quite attached to those lovable furballs.

2. Will Guile be in Street Fighter 3? Please say "yes!" I'm already praying to the Capcom god every night!

3. Are Blanka and Guile hidden characters in Alpha 2? I've heard rumors about them, but haven't seen anything yet!

4. Is there any way I can contact Bengus and other Capcom artists to exalt them on their artwork, and possibly beg for a piece?

5. Could you do some coverage of the American Street Fighter cartoon in E-Fan or something? I really love that show; especially the episodes, "Strange Bedfellows" and "Chunnel Vision." The animation's awesome! I remember that report you did on the EWJ cartoon a bunch of issues back, and thought you did a real nice job with it, so I felt SF deserved such high honors, too.

6. Does GameFan have any sort of internship program or anything? 'Cause I know a while back you were offering positions on your staff and I would've really loved to apply for one, but I'm gonna be in college in the fall, so that would be rather difficult. But I was wonder-

program or anything? Cause I know a wiffle back you were offering positions on your staff and I would've really loved to apply for one, but I'm gonna be in college in the fall, so that would be rather difficult... But I was wondering if you had such a program for aspiring vidgame editors who are just out of college or looking to spend a summer as an intern? That would be really cool!

7. Whatever happened to that SF: the Animated Movie FMV game? I used to hear snippets of info about it, but haven't seen anymore of it for months! Is it still in production?
Well, that's it for now; but don't worry, I'll be

back to hassle you for more cool info in the future! Oh, and by the way, thanks to you (for printing my letter any artwork), I've got an awesome pen-pal now! Say "Hi" to the rest of the GF staff for me! Until next time, may the force of the Flash Kick be with you!

The world's biggest Guile fan, Jen Seng

Dear Jen: As you can see I'm totally out of space! I'll have to mail you the answers this time. I had to print your latest though, we're getting a lot of mail about you. Is it the art or your friendly personality? (I'm sure it's probably both.)

P.S. The font was fine.

P.P.S. Check out Dallas and his Guile plea...



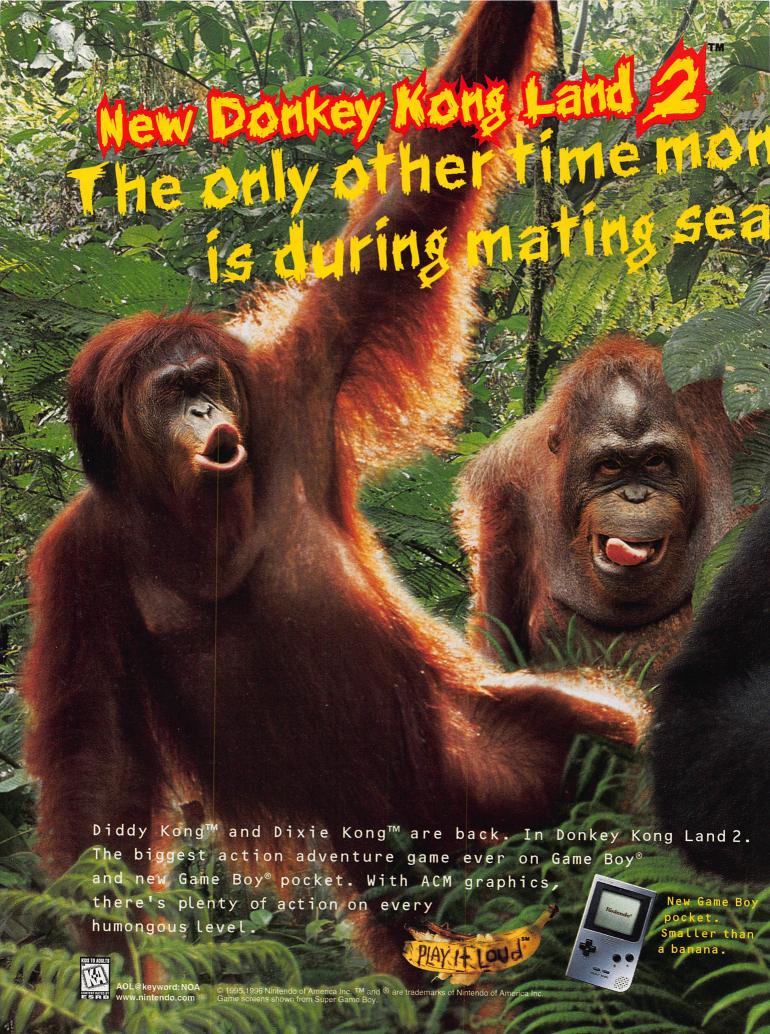
Hmmm... I wonder if Jen Seng would be interested in being pen pals with a bored gamer in Naples Italy? Please expose my address to the world, so that Jen might be kind enough to write me.

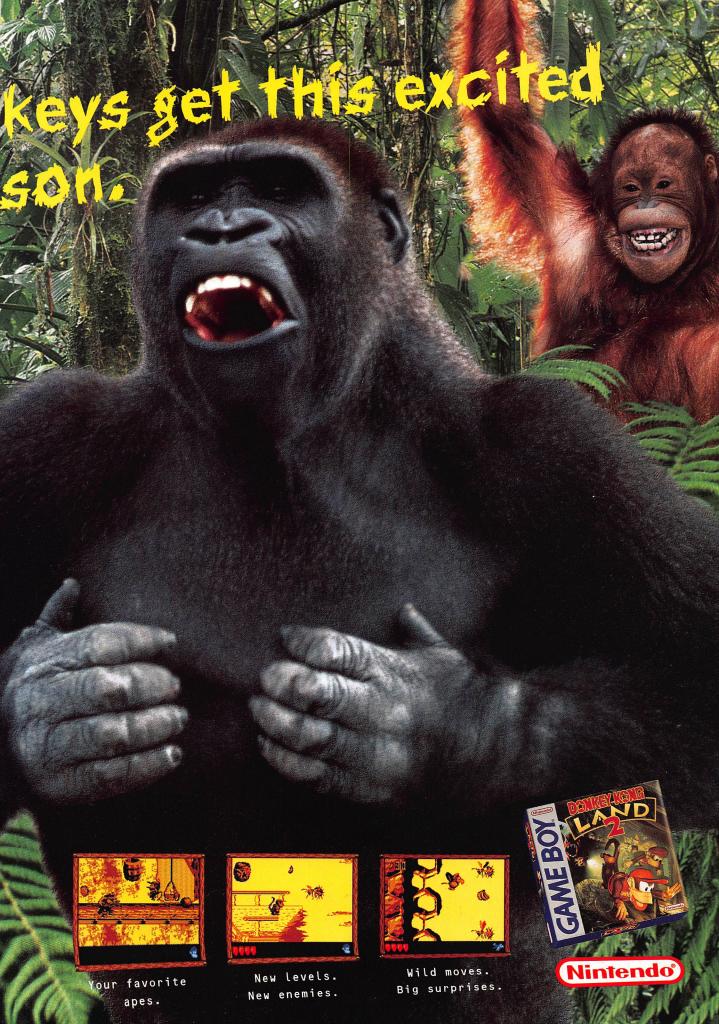
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Fighting Vipers, the most vicious streetfighters ever to terrorize arcades, are now on their way to your home. Skatepunks. Rollerbladers. Axe-wielding rockers. Caged. Enraged. And ready to fight filthy. killer, armor-stripping slams. Nasty moves that blow combatants through cage walls and into oblivion. Brutality. Carnage. kick-butt realism. Funky venues. Arenas with electric and razor-wire fences. Fatal distractions. Real-time shadows. it's all here. Wanna pick a fight?







